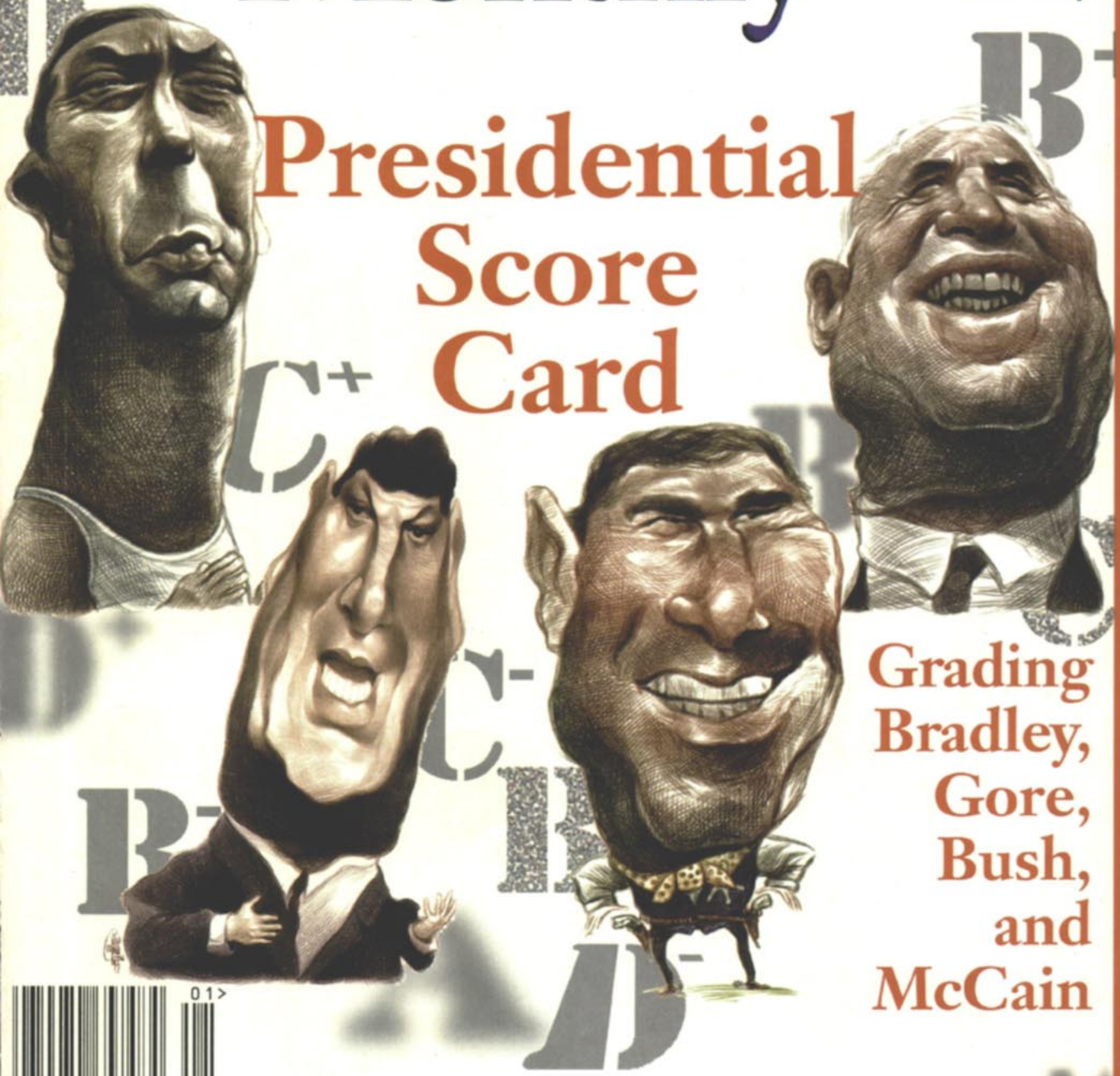
The Washington Monthly

JANUARY/FEBRUARY
2000

$3.95
CAN. $4.95

Taylor Branch reviews Ronald Steel's new book on Robert Kennedy



Presidential Score Card

Grading Bradley, Gore, Bush, and McCain

01>
74470 65748 4

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Hill™

The Hill

Angry union members give to GOP races

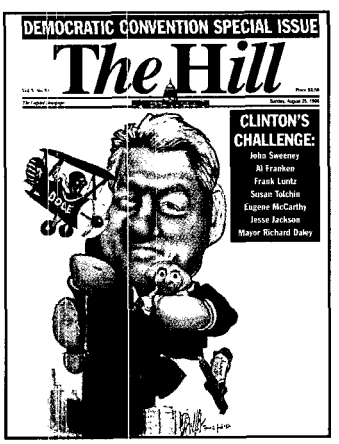
Hill candidates court Perot party support

Gingrich, Gephardt endure icy standoff

Hill conferences falling into disuse

Holy Moses! Frank's spouse gets revenge

Inside every Wednesday's issue of The Hill, you'll get the insiders track on Congress. Discover the issues that shape the nation and the personalities within the country's largest town hall. We give you both hard-hitting investigative reporting and a behind-the-scenes look at how legislation emerges from an array of conflicting interests.



The Hill

Three Senate aides fired after brawl

Polls drove Dems, GOP to delay exit

Campaign probes saw 79 witnesses take Fifth

House members seeking other offices faced self-imposed term limits

To subscribe to The Hill, complete the form below and include method of payment.
Subscription: $100 for a year, $175 for two years *(DC residents add 5.75% sales tax).*

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Return to The Hill • 733 Fifteenth Street NW • Suite 1140 • Washington, DC 20005
For faster service, fax to: 202.628.8514

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contents

The Washington Monthly
Volume 32, Numbers 1&2 • January/February 2000

Features

4 TILTING AT WINDMILLS
Cyanide in the Fridge ... The 36-Hour Stretch ... Naomi and Jocelyn ... Tips for Terrorists ... Conservative Divorce ... Medical Mistakes.
BY CHARLES PETERS

9 **Don't Be Down On The Farm**
What we can do to preserve a national treasure.
BY SEN. BYRON DORGAN

15 **Beyond Band-Aids**
Why incremental reform can't solve our health-care crisis.
BY DAVID NATHER

22 **Reserves and Guard: A More Selective Service**
Excerpted from Adam Hochschild's 1971 article on what it was really like to be in the Reserves and Guard during the Vietnam War.

26 **Medicine Wheel**
A federal program that actually works.
BY ESTHER PAN

Cover Story

31 **Presidential Aptitude Test**
What you really need to know to pick a president.
BY STEPHEN POMPER AND NICHOLAS THOMPSON

On Political Books

46 **Robert Kennedy, Good and Bad**
The scum and glory of later Camelot.
BY TAYLOR BRANCH

48 **Getting the Scoop**
Memories from journalism's golden age.
BY MARK FELDSTEIN

51 **Political Booknotes**
Reviews by ANDREW COCKBURN, CHRISTINE GRAY, CURTIS GANS, RICHARD KAHLENBERG, and ROMESH RATNESAR.

Departments

2 **Letters**
14 **Tidbits & Outrages**
25 **Memo of the Month**
28 **Who's Who**
38 **Monthly Journalism Award**

Cover design by Tara Mansbridge

Cover caricatures by Ron Coddington/KRT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Letters

Bringing Up Baby

As a working mother who got her professional start at the *Monthly*, I was dismayed to read Charles Peters' assertion (Tilting at Windmills, November 1999) that children are better off if one parent stays home during their early years, or if both parents work part-time and share child-rearing.

Most studies that have followed the children of working parents over time have found no negative effects of long parental work hours on children's achievement, intellectual ability, or emotional well-being. What the studies do show is intuitive: that children grow up healthiest and happiest when they are showered with love and support—from parents, professional caregivers, family members, and others.

The children of working parents learn that Mommy and Daddy love them and that other people can love them too. And when they grow up, these boys and girls reap another benefit: the knowledge that they can pursue their goals and be good parents.

ESTHER SCHRADER
Reporter
Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Kind Word

The Washington Monthly makes me wish we could make it required reading. Thank you Charles Peters and all you dedicated journalists who don't subscribe to the "gotcha" mentality of most. What would we do without you?

BARBARA COULSON
Marshall, NC

Liberal Foundations

In the November 1999 issue of *The Washington Monthly*, David Callahan paints a sinister and one-sided portrait of free-market and conservative policy institutes. Callahan, who works for the liberal National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, asserts that corporations have stepped up donations to conservative think-tanks during the 1990s.

A balanced report would have informed your readers that "corporate giving to public-affairs organizations disproportionately benefits organizations seeking to expand regulation and the welfare state," according to a review conducted by the Capital Research Center. Further, foundations such as MacArthur, Ford, Rockefeller, and the Pew Charitable Trusts give well over a billion dollars each year to their pet liberal causes, including projects inimical to business interests.

RICHARD NOYES
Director
Free Market Project
Alexandria, Va.

The Enforcers Reply

It is unfortunate that in his November 1999 article, "Asleep on the Beat," Robert Worth chose to ignore the facts and distort the EPA's record on federal environmental enforcement. This Administration's federal environmental enforcement program is the strongest in the history of environmental law, both in terms of federal presence and environmental results.

Mr. Worth cited 340 individuals doing enforcement work in EPA Headquarters in 1993 and 140 in 1997. This is seriously in error—the comparable total in EPA Headquarters is now in excess of 500 full time equivalents.

STEVEN A. HERMAN
Assistant Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
Washington, D.C.

I am disappointed that *The Washington Monthly* chose to run an article as incomplete and misleading as "Soft on Crime." It does not accurately depict the work U.S. Attorney's offices are doing to enforce environmental laws. That is not surprising because your reporter failed to contact anyone in the Justice Department who knows what environmental crimes prosecutors are doing across the country. The real story is that federal prosecutors are taking on this country's biggest polluters and winning.

ROBERT C. BUNDY
United States Attorney
District of Alaska
Anchorage, Ala.

In his jeremiad against state environmental agencies, Robert Worth argues that states have begun a "race to the bottom" through lax enforcement of environmental laws. His argument just doesn't hold water, clean or otherwise.

He acknowledges that there are significant problems with environmental enforcement and compliance data—then uses just that questionable data, along with unnamed sources and unpeer-reviewed studies from groups with suspect motivation, to indict states and EPA. He ignores reams of good data showing that, by virtually every measure, actual environmental quality has been improving.

He might have mentioned that states have increased their work forces by 60 percent in the last decade and their environmental budgets by 140 percent. States now spend about twice what EPA spends on the environment. States implement about 75 percent of the environmental programs that can be delegated to the States, do 97 percent of the environmental inspections, and conduct more than 80 percent of all enforcement.

ROBERT E. ROBERTS
Executive Director
The Environmental Council of the States
Washington, D.C.

Robert Worth replies: Mr. Herman claims that I "ignore the facts and distort the record" on federal environmental enforcement. But I stated that federal enforcement appears to be in good health (although that doesn't excuse the feds from failing to oversee the states adequately). As for the staffing figures I have, these come from EPA officials in the office at the time and are based on the older definition of enforcement, not the new, broader one.

Mr Bundy's letter does not address the study published by the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility that I cited in my article, which found that prosecution of environmental crimes has fallen sharply during the Clinton administration. When I called the Justice Department about the study, they cited some of their successes but did not respond to PEER's claim about the falloff in prosecution.

As for Mr. Roberts' claim that I use "questionable data": As I acknowledged in the article, there were errors in last spring's EPA reports on state enforcement. But officials at the EPA and Inspector General's offices agreed that even accounting for these errors, state enforcement has declined sig-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nificantly. Mr. Roberts claims that states have increased their budgets by 140 percent in the last decade, but this says nothing about enforcement. And finally, the fact that the states are charged with the bulk of environmental enforcement—as Mr. Roberts notes—is precisely the reason why their failure to do a better job deserves more public attention.

Changing Times

I was amused by Gregg Easterbrook's review of my book *Republic of Denial: Press, Politics and Public Life* in your October issue, which lacks in attentive reading of my thesis what it packs in poorly timed assessment on his part of what's happening out there.

Last point first: Mr. Easterbrook claims I treat the fact that the news business is a business as a "sinister fact." What rot. Of course it's a business, and I deal with the history of it: The question, agonized over in the business, is what else it has been. In that context, Mr. Easterbrook dismisses my critical treatment of Mark Willes' management of *Times Mirror* and its flagship newspaper, the *Los Angeles Times*, which as the book explains, Willes ran as publisher for an extended period before handing off that second job to a hapless protégé in June. Mr. Easterbrook informs us that under Mr. Willes the *Los Angeles Times* "continue to be excellent—it now rivals for first-place in quality *The New York Times*, a fact not well known on the East Coast."

Readers may want to know that since your review went to press the *Los Angeles Times* has become a spectacle of self-inflicted managerial disaster. It did this by following Mr. Willes' diktat to tear down the "wall" between "church" (the newsroom) and "state" (the front office), a plan critiqued at length in my book, right out the window. In late October, Kathryn Downing, Mr. Willes' hand-picked replacement as publisher, apologized to what news reports called an "appalled" *Los Angeles Times* newsroom for a "betrayal" of the paper's integrity in the form of a secretive scheme to share advertising profits with a subject of the paper's coverage. She announced a needed rewriting of "wall" guidelines "clearly defin[ing] editorial independence and integrity" and "special awareness training for current and future business-side employees" about "wall" culture and lore. In case Downing and Mr. Willes (who issued a lame apology about the episode not being the *Times*' "finest hour" and the need "to reflect deeply and carefully on what happened") thought that cleared the air, the paper and corporation's founding family heir and former chairman, Otis Chandler, wrote the paper's "abused and misused" editorial department blasting Willes' and Downing's "unbelievably stupid and unprofessional management."

More serious is Mr. Easterbrook's suggestion that my thesis is that "the country is going to hell in a handbasket" (what a phrasemaker!) and that the news business fails to deal with that steady trend. That is not my thesis. As I take care to write in my introduction, the cumulative experience of decline, loss, trauma and erosion in recent decades from Vietnam to Watergate to rustbelt to inflation to job insecurity is "not the only story of our time, and it need not constitute destiny now. But it's the story that dominated American history and spirit in the last third of the twentieth century. It's the real world components of the story that have taken the bloom off the liberations, hopes, and turns for the better of the era." Shaping political and cultural history, that is what Jimmy Carter tried and failed to treat as "malaise," that is what Ronald Reagan succeeded in treating as "Morning in America." The effect, together with all sorts of other factors, I argue, broke the chain of public engagement with "the news" as meaningful, and the news business has failed to deal with that fact. Instead, trying to hold its numbers (let alone, as at the *Los Angeles Times*, increase them to levels Otis Chandler and other news business figures have called outlandish), it resorts to marketing schemes, and a commercialization of method and mission at the expense of editorial integrity and public trust. That's the story of what happened at the *Los Angeles Times*, that's a story all too common in the news business around the country. You can read about the why and wherefore in my book, but not in Mr. Easterbrook's piece.

MICHAEL JANEWAY
Director
Columbia University
Graduate School of Journalism
New York, N.Y.

The Washington Monthly

Editor in Chief Charles Peters

Editors Stephen Pomper, Nicholas Thompson

Contributing Editors Jonathan Alter, Thomas N. Bethell, Tom Bethell, Katherine Boo, Taylor Branch, Matthew Cooper, Michelle Cottle, Gregg Easterbrook, James Fallows, Paul Glastris, Mickey Kaus, Phil Keisling, Michael Kinsley, Nicholas Lemann, Suzannah Lessard, Arthur Levine, Jon Meacham, Matthew Miller, Timothy Noah, Joseph Nocera, Leonard Reed, John Rothchild, Jonathan Rowe, David Segal, Walter Shapiro, Joshua Wolf Shenk, Scott Shuger, Steven Waldman

Editorial Advisory Board Charles W. Bailey, Russell Baker, James David Barber, Edgar Cahn, David Halberstam, Richard Reeves, Hugh Sidey

Business Manager Patricia Simon

Production Manager John Hansel

Interns Jocelyn Bogdan, Nicole Morgan, Lucinda Vette

Subscription rates: U.S. and possessions: one year, $39.95; two years, $76.95; three years, $109.95. For Canadian and foreign subscriptions, add $7 for surface delivery; air mail delivery add $32. Back issues, $5. Send correspondence concerning subscriptions, undelivered copies, and address changes to 1611 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009. For address changes, provide six weeks' notice and include old address label. Send subscription complaints to Charles Peters, *The Washington Monthly*, 1611 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009. *The Washington Monthly* is indexed in the Book Review Index, Political Science Abstracts, Public Affairs Information Service, the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, and Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory and may be obtained on microfilm from University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. For reprint rights call Patricia Simon at (202) 462-0128. Published monthly except combined Jan./Feb. and July/Aug. issues by The Washington Monthly Co., 1611 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20009. Printed in U.S.A. © 1999 The Washington Monthly Co. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited. ISSN 0043-0633. Postmaster: Send change of address to *The Washington Monthly*, 1611 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20009. Periodicals postage paid at Mechanicsburg, PA. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Send manuscripts and letters to: Editors, 1611 Connecticut Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20009 or e-mail to: **editors@washingtonmonthly.com.**

The Washington Monthly Online:
http://www.washingtonmonthly.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tilting at Windmills

By Charles Peters

Cyanide in the Fridge • The 36-Hour Stretch • Naomi and Jocelyn
Tips for Terrorists • Conservative Divorce • Medical Mistakes

One problem in figuring out what happened on the Egypt Air crash is that both the flight data recorder and the voice recorder stopped working when the airplane's power failed. Why? Because they didn't have any back-up batteries. The pingers on black-boxes do have batteries, but they're activated only after the crash. Why doesn't the FAA require batteries for the flight data and voice recorders? They couldn't cost very much. This reminds me of the years it took the FAA to make up its mind to require another inexpensive safety precaution—smoke detectors in toilets.

••••••••

Which will cost the taxpayer less—student loans made by the government or student loans made by private banks? The answer is the government. It will actually make a profit of $4 for every $100 a student borrows, according to a recent study reported by *The Washington Post*'s Kenneth J. Cooper, while private bank loans will cost the taxpayer $18 in subsidies for every $100 borrowed. Why not eliminate the subsidies to the banks?

••••••••

Richard Carlson, the former head of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, recently wrote an article about a job he held when he was in his 20s. He was a leg man for Louella Parsons, the legendary Hollywood columnist. He tells a story about a time when Parsons was accused, after her car full of birthday presents from studio bosses had been stolen, of calling all the gift-givers and demanding that they replace the presents. "Do you know why the story is false?" she indignantly asked her staff. "Because anyone who knows me knows that the studios deliver my presents. It is ridiculous to say that I picked them up myself. I would never do that."

Masturbation as a way of dealing with adolescent desire makes sense to me.

Self-criticism on the banks of the Potomac is as rare as in Beverly Hills. I am reminded of the time the then chief justice, Warren Burger, was accused of having a government car pick up his daughter's laundry. His righteous reply: "It was my laundry."

••••••••

The fact that Al Gore was paying Naomi Wolf $15,000 a month embarrasses me. The fact that she advocates masturbation as a way of dealing with adolescent desire does not embarrass me. And I can't see why it does anyone else, especially conservatives who are always telling teenagers that they must behave themselves. The Republicans jumped all over Jocelyn Elders for urging masturbation. Remember how they drove her from office? What she and Naomi Wolf say on this subject makes perfect sense to me and it should appeal to conservatives as a realistic way to deal with the combination of raging hormones and immature judgment that is characteristic of adolescence.

Conservatives are similarly hypocritical in their opposition to gay marriage. A grave problem in the male homosexual community is promiscuous sex with all its lack of commitment and danger of disease. The best solution to the problem is to encourage lasting relationships. Marriage is the way society encourages such relationships.

••••••••

Medical interns can now form a union to protect themselves from being overworked, thanks to a recent ruling by the National Labor Relations Board. This is good news to all of us who have worried about the harm that exhausted interns can do to the patients in their care. Past reform laws—New York's consisted of limiting the number of hours an intern or resident worked to 80 a week—clearly did not solve a problem that unions may be the only effective way to remedy.

I'm infamous for being one of the slave-drivers of journalism. A lot of hard work is involved in mastering a craft whether it's journalism or medicine. But I long ago learned that sleeplessness doesn't help the learning process. So I hope the unions will protect the interns and residents from insane practices such as "the 36-hour stretches without a nap"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

described by Dr. Abigail Zuger in a recent article in *The New York Times*. What I hope the unions will not do is focus on wages instead of working conditions. It may be that just the threat of unionization will be enough to induce hospital administrators to be more humane. Anyway, the NLRB is to be congratulated for making the ruling. The Board may have saved thousands of potential victims from the mistakes of bleary-eyed interns.

••••••••

SPEAKING OF MEDICAL MISTAKES, the thousands of unnecessary deaths they cause suddenly became a big story in December. At least twice it was the lead on network news and in major newspapers. Everyone seemed astonished. Bill Clinton said he hadn't known about the problem. He should have been attending to *The Washington Monthly* more closely. We've talked about it often. The last time was in our September issue.

••••••••

YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED that Bill Bradley has won the support of many professional basketball players. So did Dave Kindred of *The Sporting News*, but he also noticed that they were all older players, none from today. He found the explanation in a story about Michael Jordan.

When asked why he refused to take sides in his home-state North Carolina Senate race between the African-American Democratic candidate, Harvey Gantt, and the Republican racist, Jesse Helms, Jordan said: "Republicans buy shoes too."

Readers who aren't sports fans are probably scratching their heads. Jordan, like other star players of his era, is a multi-millionaire who makes substantial sums endorsing sports footwear. If these stars have any interest in public affairs, it is probably concentrated on issues like tax breaks.

••••••••

BACK TO MEDICAL MISDEEDS. Martin Keller, a Brown University professor, earned $842,000 last year. More than half of that came from drug companies like Pfizer, Eli Lilly, and Bristol-Myers Squibb. At the same time, according to Dolores Kong and Alison Bass of the *Boston Globe*, he was writing medical journal articles and making speeches that lauded antidepressants manufactured by the same companies. Brown was also receiving millions of dollars for Keller's research on depression from the National Institute of Mental Health. Federal regulations require that those receiving research grants must disclose any "significant financial interests" that could be affected by the study. But Brown did not reveal Keller's relationship with the drug companies.

Unfortunately, this is not rare. Terence Monmaney of the *Los Angeles Times* has disclosed that out of 36 "Drug Therapy" articles published by the most prestigious of medical publications, *The New England Journal of Medicine*, eight had "undisclosed financial links to drug companies that marketed treatments evaluated in the articles."

••••••••

WHAT STATES HAVE THE HIGHEST divorce rate? There's no surprise in the one that comes in first. It's Nevada. But the next four should give conservatives pause. They are Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama and Oklahoma—all certifiably Bible Belt territory. In these four states, according to Associated Press, the divorce rate isn't just a little bit more—it is 50 percent above the rest of the country.

••••••••

A 79-YEAR-OLD ALZHEIMERS' patient recently got lost while driving a car he had rented at Baltimore-Washington International Airport. An Alzheimers' patient driving a car? That just doesn't make sense. Too many of my fellow seniors are driving when they shouldn't. A three-year study of Hawaiian driving records has found, according to the Associated Press that, "drivers over 75 were far more likely to be cited for [offenses such as] failing to yield to a pedestrian, backing up unsafely, and failing to stop at flashing red lights." It just makes sense to have more stringent renewal procedures for older people. I say this even as one who was hoisted by his own petard when I was subjected last December to the District of Columbia's more careful screening of seniors.

••••••••

A KIND WORD FOR SOMEONE the *Monthly* has seldom praised: Steve Forbes is the only one of the presidential candidates to have the courage to take on the current hero of the respectable class, Alan Greenspan. Forbes is right that Greenspan has too long feared that full employment must lead to inflation.

••••••••

TRUCK SAFETY IS AN ISSUE often addressed by this column. Last year 5,374 people died in truck accidents. The lack of effective regulation has been a scandal. So I'm happy to report that Congress has finally addressed the problem. It has created a new agency within the Department of Transportation to implement a sensible program of truck safety. The question now is whether the Clinton administration will select good people to run the program. Let's hope the media will follow what is done closely to make sure the promise of this reform is realized.

••••••••

KATHLEEN KENNEDY TOWNSEND, the lieutenant governor of Maryland and a potential candidate to become governor, has contributed several articles to this magazine

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

over the years and in the process has become a friend so what follows could be less than totally objective. But I am disturbed by the fact that one of her probable opponents, C.A. "Dutch" Ruppersberger, begins the campaign with $529,624 cash in the bank. Did he raise the money as a candidate for governor? No, it's left over from his successful campaign to be Baltimore County Executive. Why should money citizens contribute to a campaign for one office be available for use in a campaign for another office? The contributors may have thought Dutch was the best of the candidates running for County Executive. They never said they wanted him to be governor.

The country has done well lately, but Manhattan's elite has done a hell of a lot better.

•••••••••

THE GIFT CATALOG OF WALL Street Creations, Ltd. offers a Shark Card Holder. "They'll certainly understand your style with our imported Shark Card Holder on your desk. Its highly original design, executed in gleaming polished pewter, will raise a few eyebrows and bring new respect to your business card." Well, at least they're right about the eyebrows.

•••••••••

EVIDENCE THAT THE GULF-war syndrome is not some fantasy illness comes from brain scans that show the damage veterans suffered. Those who believe they have the illness have up to 25 percent lower levels of the brain chemical N-acetyl-aspartate in the brain stem and basal ganglia which are switching stations for reflexes and nerve impulses that govern movement, memory, and emotion. The study was conducted by the National Academy of Science and the National Research Council. "Researchers believe soldiers who became ill were those who had a genetic vulnerability to certain chemicals used in the war," says the Associated Press in its report of the study, including the drug pyridostygmine bromide, which was given to "as many as 250,000 soldiers in the belief that it would protect them from the toxic effect of nerve gas." Readers will recall that this possibility was suggested by Amy Waldman in the December 1996 issue of *The Washington Monthly*.

•••••••••

IN DECEMBER, *Fortune* published its annual power ranking of Washington lobbies. The bad news is that no environmental lobby made the top 25. The Sierra Club did best but still it was only No. 43. The good news is that the Christian Coalition dropped from No. 7 to No. 35.

•••••••••

THE INDEPENDENT WEEKLY newspapers that for so long have been a bulwark of small-town and rural American life are rapidly "being snapped up by hungry chains," according to Buzz Bissinger, in the latest installment of the *American Journalism Review*'s notable series on the state of the American newspaper. This is exactly what has been happening to local radio stations. (See "The Death of Local Radio" by Lydia Polgreen in the April 1999 issue of *The Washington Monthly*.) The loss of the independent local voice has two inevitable evil results: cultural homogenization and oligarchic domination of the media.

•••••••••

JOSEPH CALIFANO'S ARTICLE, "Why the Great Society was Great," in our October issue may have may have been the beginning of a long-overdue reappraisal of LBJ's presidency. In November, John Kenneth Galbraith, who had been one of Johnson's severest critics, made a speech at the LBJ Library in Austin, Texas in which he said the historical view of Johnson is "in need of substantial modification. The initiatives of Lyndon Johnson on civil rights, voting rights, and on economic and social rights must no longer be enshrouded by [the Vietnam War]." In December, George McGovern, who waged his campaign for the presidency in opposition to the Vietnam War, wrote an op-ed article in *The New York Times* headed "Discovering Greatness in Lyndon Johnson" and arguing that "Vietnam was not of his making. A better society was."

•••••••••

"THE NATIONAL SECURITY Agency has fallen behind in the high-tech battle against terrorists," report Gregory Vistica and Evan Thomas of *Newsweek*. It appears that one reason we've had difficulty nailing Osama bin Laden is that he uses European-made encrypted phones the NSA can't eavesdrop on.

•••••••••

HERE'S ANOTHER WORRY about terrorism. Government medical stockpiles for dealing with chemical or biological terrorism are poorly managed, often lacking vital drugs and adequate security," according to an Associated Press account of a GAO report. Responsibility for the management of drug stockpiles is vested in the Department of Veteran Affairs. "At one VA location, the entire drug supply of amyl nitrate, an inhaled drug used as an antidote for cyanide poisoning, had expired dates," according to the GAO. At another, the drug—which has a pleasurable use as a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stimulant—was found stored in a staff refrigerator beside employee lunches.

••••••••

THE PENTAGON HAS MORE than 2.4 million employees who hold security clearance. Doesn't that mean we have an awfully big support system for the small number of fighting men we're able to put in the field? That question aside, it's really hard to believe that, as Walter Pincus reports in *The Washington Post*, 524,000 need "top secret" clearance, 1.8 million "secret clearance," and fewer than 100,000 "confidential" which as a common-sense guess is what almost all of the 2.4 million really need. But assuming the higher classifications are necessary, then we've got a lot to worry about. The Pentagon has a backlog of 600,000 employees awaiting investigation of their clearance. "Top secrets" have to be reviewed every five years and "secrets" every ten. Security investigations that are supposed to take 90 days are taking 204 days according to the GAO. (For a similar problem at the CIA, see "Who's Who.")

••••••••

THOSE PESKY UNINTENDED consequences that the conservatives love to find resulting from regulation can also be produced by deregulation. Consider utility cuts. This is the term to describe what happens when a utility tears up your city's streets. Before deregulation, there was only one telephone company that ripped up the pavement. Now there are about a dozen communication companies that have the right to create traffic chaos. The utilities are supposed to restore the streets to their previous condition but what they often do is to destroy the integrity of the pavement and then claim to repair the damage by filling in the hole they dug and repaving it, not the rest of the street. This is an invitation to potholes that is usually accepted within months. Of course the potholes are often no worse than the temporary or partial fixes that have preceded them, many of which are themselves serious teeth-rattlers. Some cities at least make utilities pay a fee for the right to use the underground space. Does yours? The District doesn't.

••••••••

NOW SOME GOOD NEWS. DID you know that Medicare spending actually dropped last year? The decline may have been just one percent but what is significant is that in every other year of Medicare's existence, spending has increased.

••••••••

You've seen the 'war film to end all war films.'

How about a film to end all war.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

LOS ANGELES TIMES

ROGER EBERT, CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

Regret to Inform

www.regrettoinform.org

Academy Award™ Nominee *Regret to Inform*, airs on Monday, January 24, 10 pm on the PBS film series P.O.V. (check local listings).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Seeking nominations for:

The Washington Monthly's

ANNUAL POLITICAL BOOK AWARD

Previous winners include:
Michael Massing
(*The Fix*, 1998)
Ron Suskind
(*A Hope In The Unseen*, 1998)
Thomas E. Ricks
(*Making the Corps*, 1997)
James Fallows
(*Breaking the News*, 1996)
Charles C. Moskos & John Sibley Butler
(*All That Was Can Be*, 1996)
Leon Dash
(*Rosa Lee*, 1996)
Steven Waldman
(*The Bill*, 1995)

Nominations are due by January 21, 2000. Winners will be announced in the March issue. Please note that only books published in 1999 are eligible.

Send nominations, along with, if possible, two copies of the book, to:

The Washington Monthly
Book Award
1611 Connecticut Ave., NW
Suite 4A
Washington, DC 20009

Or e-mail nominations to:
editors@washingtonmonthly.com

ANOTHER DEVELOPMENT TO applaud is that someone has at last stood up successfully to the outrageous excesses of executive compensation. A Delaware judge has ruled in favor of shareholders who objected to the lush provision made for the top officials of Computer Associates International Inc. The judge said the officers would have to give back a bonus consisting of a half-billion dollars worth of stock that had not been approved by the shareholders. The judge let the officials keep $320 million, which he correctly characterized as "no mere bagatelle."

I've long thought teachers should audition like actors.

•••••••

THE FINAL PIECE OF GOOD news and to me the best of all is that Wisconsin, which took the lead in welfare reform, is now assuming the same role in teacher licensing. John Benson, the state's superintendent of schools, has submitted a plan to the Wisconsin legislature that would go a long way toward assuring teacher competence. According to an article describing the proposal by Joe Williams in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, college students who want to enter teacher training must pass a test in reading, writing, mathematics, computer use, and speaking. To get their first license, they must pass a test in the subject they will teach.

I love the speaking and subject tests. I've long thought teachers should audition like actors. Can they stand and perform in the classroom? This aptitude is crucial as of course is subject knowledge, which the American system of teacher preparation and evaluation has long been notorious for neglecting.

And Wisconsin won't stop there. After getting their initial license, teachers will receive support from a mentor and be evaluated by a team of another teacher, an administrator, and a college professor. The next license will be based on performance, not merely the fact that they have endured, which is so often the case in public schools today. A third tier of recognition, master teacher, will be rewarded with merit pay. All this strikes me as wonderful. And guess what else. Benson has won the support of the teachers union! At least of its leadership—the Wisconsin Education Association Council. Pray that the membership goes along and does not try to torpedo this groundbreaking reform as it goes through the legislature.

•••••••

THE NEW YORK TIMES recently warned its affluent readers who take cruises that "getting sick on a cruise may mean medical care with few standards." Why? Because there is almost no regulation of the cruise industry. So here again is a case where the problem is not too much regulation, as the Republicans complain, but too little.

•••••••

THE TIMES' SOLICITUDE FOR cruise passengers is just a tiny part of its dedication to counseling the comfortable. You will recall its series of articles on the problem of hiring and dealing with personal trainers. Then a couple of months ago came an article on the care and feeding of butlers. Most recently, we have two-thirds of the front-page of the Sunday Styles section devoted to social secretaries, the "Alter Egos Who Put the 'R' in R.S.V.P." The country as a whole has done well in the '90s—but one gets the impression from these articles that Manhattan's elite has done a hell of a lot better. ●

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Don't Be Down On The Farm

What we can do to preserve a national treasure

By Senator Byron Dorgan

A traveler through Western Europe these days observes something unusual to American eyes. Family-based agriculture is thriving there. The countryside is dotted with small, prosperous farms, and the communities these support are generally prosperous as well. The reason, of course, is that Europe encourages its family-scale agriculture, while America basically doesn't care. The difference was apparent at the World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle. The European representatives were talking about families and communities, while the Americans talked about markets. You listen to the speeches, as I did, and a question looms up in your mind. If American trade representatives think these European values represent the problem, just what do they think represents the solution? If prosperous rural economies are not a worthy goal, then what is?

The question is of great urgency among U.S. farmers these days. Out beyond the prosperity of Wall Street and Silicon Valley, the producers in America's food economy are struggling for survival. The weather has been miserable. Prices for some commodities are at Depression-era levels. Imports are soaring, and giant agribusiness firms are squeezing out farmers for a bigger share of the food dollar. In this setting, farm auctions have become a grim daily counterpoint to the Wall Street boom.

The stories are wrenching beyond description. I received a letter from a woman whose son refused to get out of bed the day the family farm was auctioned off. His dream was to become a farmer like his dad, and he couldn't bear to watch that dream get sold off by a bank. Suicides among farmers are now three times the rate of the nation as a whole. One Iowa farmer left a note that said, "Everything is gone, wore out or shot, just like me."

Many in the opinion class offer an obligatory regret and then wonder why we should care. Family farmers are just poignant footnotes to the bright new economy, they say, like the little diners that got left behind on Route 1 when the interstates came in. "The U.S. no longer needs agriculture and is rapidly outgrowing it," said Steven Blank, an economist at the University of California at Davis. In this view, farms, like steel mills and television factories, can move to low-cost climes abroad, and should. "It is the improvement in the efficiency of the American economy."

Most express themselves in more diplomatic terms. But that's basically the expert view. An economy is just a mathematical equation and efficiency, narrowly defined, is the ultimate value. If family-based agriculture disappears, so be it. This view isn't just distasteful. It is shortsighted and wrong.

The fact is, family-based agriculture is not unproductive or inefficient, even by the narrow calculus of the economics profession. (I'll go into that a little later.) First off, if we care about food, we will not welcome an economy in which control of the food chain lies in a few corporate hands. Monsanto-in-the-Fields is not everyone's idea of the food economy they want. But the basic issue here goes far beyond food. It speaks to us as citizens rather than just as shoppers; ultimately it concerns the kind of country we are going to be. The family farm today is a sort of canary in the mine shaft of the global economy. It shows in stark terms what happens to our lives, our communities, and our values when we prostrate ourselves before the narrow and myopic calculus of international finance. So doing, it raises what is probably the single most important economic question America faces: What is an economy for?

For decades the nation has listened to a policy establishment that views the economy as a kind of "Stuff Olympics." The gold medal goes to the nation that accumulates the most stuff and racks up the biggest GDP. Enterprise is valued only to the extent it serves this end. But what happens when we produce more stuff than we need but less of other things, such as

Byron Dorgan *is a Democratic senator from North Dakota.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

community, that we need just as much? Do we continue our efforts to produce more of what we already have a glut of? Or do we ask a different question? If Americans say we need stronger families and better communities, then we need to question whether our economic arrangements are contributing to those ends. If we really believe in traditional family values, then should we not support the form of agriculture—and business generally—based upon those values?

There's a way to save our family-based agriculture. Harry Truman had the answer more than fifty years ago. Put simply, Truman wanted to confine the agricultural support system to the family-sized unit. This would promote a modern and productive farm economy and healthy rural communities too. It would begin to align our economic policies with our traditional family values and social ideals. But in order to see the value of this approach, we have to put off the mythologies and ideological blinders that dominate the debate today.

Over the Edge

These mythologies start with the assumption that the struggles of family farmers are Darwinian proof of their own unfitness to survive. The fact is, family farmers are in a bind today because of deliberate actions and inactions here in Washington. An impartial market didn't decree their difficulties. Policy makers did. Yes, there has been lousy weather, an expensive dollar, and the collapse of crucial markets in Asia. These come with the territory. Since the New Deal, the federal government has sought to help farmers get through such tough times.

What's different now is that the government has tried instead to push family-based producers over the edge. The push started with the trade agreements that opened the U.S. wide to foreign production. Advocates of NAFTA and GATT promised American producers vast new markets, yet today America's trade deficit has reached record levels, and the balance of agricultural trade is heading in the same direction. You heard that right. The coal is pouring into Newcastle. By the sublime logic of the global economy, a nation that has depressed prices of durum wheat is importing durum wheat, fruit, poultry, and meat as well.

This did not happen because American farmers are backward or inefficient. It happened because of a high dollar, which works against exports; and because American trade negotiators have been more attentive to the needs of corporate food processors than to the farmers who grow the food. The U.S. trade agreement with Canada is a prime example. Before that agreement the U.S. imported virtually no durum wheat from Canada. (Durum is the kind used in pasta.) The U.S. trade representative at the time, Clayton Yeutter, assured Congress in writing that the agreement would have no effect on grain. Yet durum was pouring across the northern border almost from the moment the agreement took effect. Today, Canadian imports comprise nearly 25 percent of U.S. processed durum. These imports nearly doubled in the first five months of 1999 alone.

Some call this the Invisible Hand. But it has a lot more to do with something called the Canadian Wheat Board, a government agency that handles every bushel of wheat produced in Canada. The Wheat Board publishes no price information, so the workings of the Canadian market are inscrutable to U.S. farmers. There are subsidies for grain handling and transportation that give Canadian producers a further edge. Canada is not an exception. Most nations try to protect their own food production, and understandably so. They have long memories of wars that made food a precious commodity; and as true conservatives they value their rural traditions and cultures.

So tough luck you say: The consumer is king, and cheap imports mean low prices at the supermarket. This degradation of the producer was not what Jefferson and others had in mind when they founded our republic. But that aside, if you think the farmer's travail has been the consumer's gain, you might check your local supermarket. Somehow, those Depression-level prices on the farm haven't shown up on the bar codes. Prices of hamburger and bread have inched up, even as farm prices have plummeted.

Someone is getting the spread, and that someone is the food processing and packing industry, which has scored big off the misery of U.S. farmers. The big four cereal manufacturers have returns on equity of upwards of 29 percent even as farmers go bankrupt. From a loaf of bread that costs $1.59 at the store, the wheat farmer gets about five to six cents. In 1981 the wheat farmer got about double that. The processors can reap where the farmer sows, in large part because the industry has become so concentrated in recent years. When Ronald Reagan became president, the top four beef processors controlled about 36 percent of the market. Today the figure is over 80 percent. A wheat farmer today is dealing with a grain industry in which the top four firms control 62 percent of the business. This means a marketplace with the power to say, "take it or leave it."

The antitrust laws are supposed to prevent this kind of bullying. But decades of erosion at the hands of ideologically-disposed economists and judges have

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reduced these laws to mere "husks of what they were intended to be," as the late Justice Douglas put it. Moreover, budget cuts during the Reagan-Bush years crippled antitrust enforcement just as the current merger wave was gaining momentum. Even after modest increases under Clinton, the antitrust budget has fallen in real terms since the late 1970s. The Microsoft trial has gotten a lot of headlines. But when Cargill, the nation's number one grain exporter and the largest privately-held company, can buy the grain operations of Continental, which is number two, with barely a peep from Washington, then the cops aren't exactly walking tall on the antitrust beat.

There is a pattern here. The U.S. government has undertaken to remake the world in the image of the multinational corporation—an image in which all economic problems get reduced to mathematics. Family-based production has stubborn loyalties to locality and place. It provides a buffer against the ruthless—and often misleading—mathematics of the market. Therefore the government seeks to engineer it out of existence and to replace it with the corporation that has no such inconvenient human tendencies. This was the implicit logic of the Farm Bill of 1996.

If we really believe in traditional family values, then we should support agriculture based upon those values.

Failing the Farms

The Farm Bill of 1996 was touted as a radical break from the past. Proponents said that it would "free" farmers from the stifling bureaucracy of the federal government and enable them to make their fortunes in the global marketplace. They called the bill—with mordant irony—the Freedom to Farm Act. It seemed plausible in the flush times of the mid-'90s. But the agricultural marketplace soon cratered, and farmers found out quickly what the bill really left them free to do—Get Out of Farming Fast.

Put simply, the bill phases out the federal-price support program over a period of seven years. During that time, it doles out between $5 billion and $6 billion a year in transition payments, supposedly to wean farmers off the federal supports. These go to all agricultural entities, regardless of size and regardless of need. The bigger you are, the more you get—no matter how much money you have sitting in the bank.

It sounds like a parody of a government program. Yet that's how the bill works—or, more accurately, doesn't work. A year after the bill took effect, Congress was enacting "emergency" relief to help undo the damage it had just done. Congress just enacted another emergency measure this year. There is no end in sight. Congress buys a little quiet while the nation's family-based producers twist slowly in the wind.

Community Matters Too

From the time Franklin Roosevelt established the first farm-support programs during the Depression, a central question has gone unresolved: What is the farm program really for? People in Washington have always wrung their hands over hard-pressed family farmers. But the programs they've enacted have favored the biggest farmers and hastened the demise of the smaller ones. In its many permutations, the farm program has proceeded on the assumption that the mode and scale of production don't matter, and all that counts is a given quantity of beef or grain. This view dominates the policy and media establishments and the result is a facile cynicism regarding efforts to help the family-based producer. We need to reexamine this assumption. The embrace of text-book orthodoxies tends to blind reporters to economic reality, and to the social dimension of economic enterprise.

In reality, a family-based enterprise such as a farm produces much more than corn or wheat. It also produces a community. One might say it has a social product as well as a material product. This social product is invisible to economists and policy experts because they see only what they can count in money. But it is crucial in a nation that has more stuff than it knows what to do with but less community and stability than it needs.

This is not rural romanticism. I'm talking about the opposite—the ways that family-based enterprise provides a matrix for community life. A small town café, for example, contributes much more to the life of a rural community than its financial balance sheet would suggest. It is a hub of social interaction, a crossroads where people meet in person rather than just as blips on a computer screen. It serves to reinforce the formal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

organizations in the town, from the volunteer fire department to the PTA. Cafés are so important to small-town life that in Havana, North Dakota, (pop. 124) folks actually volunteer at the local café to keep it open.

Family-based agriculture is a prolific source of social product. Study after study has documented this effect. The most famous was that of Walter Goldschmidt of the University of California, comparing two California farm communities in the 1940s. One was comprised of small and medium sized family farms; the other of large scale producers. The localities were similar in other significant respects. Goldschmidt found that the family farms produced a measurably stronger social unit. People showed "a strong economic and social interest in their community. Differences in wealth among them are not great, and the people generally associate in those organizations which serve the community." The locality with larger farms, by contrast, had a more pronounced class structure, less stability, and less civic participation.

This will come as no surprise to people who grew up in such settings. The family and community values that people give speeches about in Washington are a fact of daily life. I remember a farmer in my home town of Regent, North Dakota, a fellow named Ernest, who had a heart attack around harvest time. His neighbors took their combines and harvested his grain. The economics textbooks call these farmers "competitors," and if they were corporations they would behave that way. But because they are real people they acted like neighbors and friends.

The social dimension of enterprise is crucial even in conventional economic terms. Francis Fukuyama, the respected writer on social dynamics, developed this subject in his book *Trust*. "Virtually all serious observers understand," he wrote, "that liberal political and economic institutions depend on a healthy and dynamic civil society for their vitality." Society needs enterprise but enterprise also needs a society.

Jefferson was right. The kind of agriculture we choose affects the kind of communities we have and the kind of nation we are going to be. A nation that tries to divorce the processes of production from larger social concerns—as policy experts do—eats its own seed corn. Neglect the social product of private enterprise, and we create the conditions for our own decline.

Small Farms Are Efficient

Against this, we have to ask what's to gain by displacing family-based farming with corporate agribusiness firms. The answer is, very little.

The supposed efficiency of corporate-scale operations has a large dose of hype. Farms can reach peak efficiency at well within the range of a family operation. Michael Duffy, an agricultural economist at Iowa State University, has found that corn and soybean producers in that state reach the low point on the production cost curve at between 300 and 500 acres. The top 10 percent of pig producers, based on cost of production, averaged 164 sows.

Wheat farmers reach lowest costs at a somewhat larger scale, but still well within a family-sized operation. The belief that bigger corporate operations mean more productive agriculture is just a "bunch of crapolla," Duffy says.

The claims of efficiency, moreover, ignore the costs that sprawling agribusiness operations impose upon the rest of us. Partly these costs are social. When there are no neighbors to drive Aunt Ella a hundred miles to the clinic, she has to use a taxpayer-funded van instead. But the biggest costs may be environmental. Corporate pig factories, for example, have become a nightmare for their neighbors. They foul local water supplies and emit a colossal stink into the air.

A county in Illinois actually had to reduce property assessments by 30 percent in the vicinity of such a plant. In North Carolina, which has emerged as a pig factory haven in recent years, Hurricane Floyd caused massive flooding of the huge lagoons that hold the wastes. The sludge spread over the countryside and leached into the groundwater. Residents were advised to drink bottled water and even to have their wells redrilled. That might be efficiency for the corporation. But it's not for the neighbors, nor for the society as a whole.

I see an economist scowling in the back row. If people wanted social product, he mutters, then they would demand it in the market.

But that's precisely the problem. Americans can't speak through the market unless the market gives them an effective choice, and under current arrangements they don't have one. When we buy pasta or pork chops at the supermarket there's nothing on the label to tell us the kind of farm it came from.

Markets are the best means we have for allocating resources, when people have both information and choices and when all costs are accounted for. But they don't work so well when information and choice are lacking and costs get shifted onto others, and that's what happens with agricultural production today. Farmers aren't getting full compensation for their production, including social product. They should. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

question is how.

The Brannan Plan

After his improbable reelection in 1948, President Harry Truman introduced a farm bill that had a truly far-sighted provision to limit federal farm supports to the family-sized unit. Farmers could become bigger if they wished. They could produce as much as they thought they could sell. But they couldn't expect the federal government to support all their ambitions.

The Brannan Plan as it was called—after then Secretary of Agriculture Charles Brannan—would have made it the policy of the United States that scale and social impact matter, in agriculture at least. Not surprisingly, the larger farm interests opposed the Brannan Plan (though mostly on other grounds) and it died a quick legislative death.

In the 50 years since, the farm program has gone from one extreme to the other—from supporting everything in sight to hitching the nation's farmers to a market ideology in a world that doesn't always buy it. We've shed crocodile tears over family farmers while promoting their demise. Now the congressional majority is in a quandary. Republicans know they have to do something. But many on that side can't bring themselves to face the implications. So they heap more blame on government, rail at the Federal Reserve Board and the government's failure to open more foreign markets, and hope the problem will just go away.

To be sure, the Federal Reserve Board is a deserving target. When you hand the management of the economy over to money center bankers, then farmers, who rely heavily on credit, are going to get shortchanged. But it's not enough to rail at the Fed. We need to put someone on the Fed who understands the value of family-based farms, and who can provide some balance to the economists and bankers who run the place now.

It is good too that Republicans want to open up foreign markets, but we've also got to develop new domestic markets. Since people can eat only so much, that means new uses for farm products. Ethanol barely scratches the surface. There are many materials, from plastics and building materials to paper and inks, that are being made from crops. In Minnesota, farmers are getting from $20 to $50 an acre for selling the right to capture the wind energy from their land. David Morris of the Institute for Local Self Reliance has sketched out the possibilities in a report called, suggestively, "The Carbohydrate Economy."

Farmers need more bargaining power in the market too, not just more points of access to it. Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota and I have proposed a moratorium on mergers in agriculture-related industries, and a complete review of the antitrust laws as they affect this part of the economy. The measure failed to pass this fall, but we will introduce it again.

But by far the most important issue is the economic safety net. No matter what else you do, farmers are going to confront bad years. There has to be a support structure of some kind, and it should advance the social values of this country rather than undermine them. Harry Truman had the right idea. There should be a support price for an amount of production that is within the range of a family-scale operation. (This would vary by crop and region of the country, of course.)

Beyond that, producers would be on their own. If they wanted to exceed the support range and take their chances in the world market, then more power to them. But we wouldn't ask the taxpayers to support a scale of operation from which there is no social benefit and for which there is no economic need.

This approach would not encourage overproduction, since there would be built-in limits on the amount of production that was supported. The caps would be enough to sustain a family-sized operation in bad years, but they would not make anyone rich. This approach would begin to compensate farmers for their contribution to rural communities—a form of production for which the global market provides no monetary return. It would recognize that the efficient destruction of community in America is not the kind of efficiency the government should encourage.

If this country can subsidize a public-housing program for millionaire athletes and billionaire owners called pro-sports stadiums, then surely it can provide a safety net for the family-scale agriculture that contributes so much to this nation. Anyone who thinks big corporations are less likely than small enterprises to ask for government help hasn't been paying much attention. Big companies, not little ones, get bailed out in America. Already, the corporate pig factories in North Carolina have asked for millions of dollars from Congress to help upgrade their waste lagoons.

An economy is supposed to provide for human need. At a time of material abundance but social scarcity, shouldn't we encourage forms of enterprise that meet the needs of our dwindling communities? If we truly believe in traditional family values, shouldn't we support the forms of enterprise that embody those values, including the family farm?

The crisis in the Farm Belt is one problem America knows how to solve. We have both the means and the resources; the question is whether we will use them.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tidbits & Outrages

O.J. was smarter.

Minutes after being acquitted of assault, David Oraha asked a police officer, "So that's it? It's over? I was acquitted, like O.J.?" After the officer nodded, Oraha said, "Well, off the record, it was me." Oraha was subsequently convicted of perjury.

Two of ea

Researchers are sa
years it may be p
ficial replacemen

How many interns does it take to slice them?

A reporter recently slipped Bill Clinton the following math question: "If there are three cucumbers in a pound, and Burger King buys 3.2 million pounds of pickles, and you can cut 20 slices of pickle from each cucumber, how many pickle slices will you get?" The reporter also asked for the name of the leader of Chechnya. Clinton replied, "192 million. I checked the calculation with the Chechnyan leader Aslan Maskhadov and he agrees."

Generation X for "No comment."

"You know, I just, you know, I'm not going to get into what I said or what I didn't say. I, I've just, you know because, I don't know how to, I mean, I don't, you know, I just, I think it's better that I don't talk about that."

—Bo Black on WTMJ-AM (620), commenting on the report that she had called John Norquist a "Nazi."

Honey, I think the bears got into our sushi.

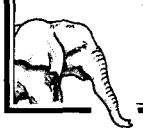
Surveys found the average *Backpacker* magazine reader made $89,500 and spent more than $4,500 on backpacking equipment and excursions last year.

In cold weather, it holds you up at gunpoint.

Last October, Coca-Cola Co. began testing a vending machine that can automatically raise prices for its drinks in hot weather.

Bipartisanship.

From Democratic Sen. John Forbes Kerry's Yale '66 yearbook: "John Forbes Kerry. Entered Yale, September 1962... Yale Young Democrats, 1962-1965... Yale Young Republicans, 1965-1966."



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Beyond Band-Aids

Why incremental reform can't solve our health-care crisis

BY DAVID NATHER

IN EARLY 1998, WHITNEY ADDINGTON, the president of the main lobbying group for doctors of internal medicine, went to Capitol Hill for a meeting with Ted Kennedy's health care staffers. Before he could say anything, David Nexon, Kennedy's top health adviser, gave him a cold dose of reality: "If you're here to talk about universal coverage, don't waste your time."

That's what happens when your party tries to do health care reform and it blows up in your face. But these days, just five years after the death of the Clinton health care reform plan, universal coverage is back on the table. It's not hard to see why. In 1994, the year the Clinton plan crashed and burned, there were 40 million Americans with no health insurance. By 1998, there were 44.3 million. The problem actually got worse as the economy boomed.

So it's back to the drawing board: The American Medical Association and a coalition of other groups claim they're putting together a plan for getting to universal coverage. House Majority Leader Dick Armey, one of Congress' most conservative Republicans, and Rep. Pete Stark, one of its most liberal Democrats, have floated an expansive tax credit program for reaching the uninsured. And in December, the Health Insurance Association of America, which brought us the "Harry and Louise" ads that helped kill the Clinton plan, and the consumer group Families USA will take their hands off each other's throats for a day and co-host a conference on how to help the uninsured.

That all sounds great, but there's a catch: Most politicians and interest groups still talk about getting to universal coverage in baby steps. After being burned in 1994, President Clinton and Congressional Democrats have pushed politically safe, bite-sized reforms—like the State Children's Health Insurance Program and the new law to help people with disabilities keep their health coverage when they go to work. Hillary Rodham Clinton, the architect of the administration's 1994 plan, is now saying she belongs to the "school of smaller steps." And Al Gore's Campaign 2000 proposal casts him firmly in the incremental mold (although his advisers concede that universal coverage is not their objective).

There's just one problem. Experts pretty much agree that step-by-step health care reform won't do the job. At least, not the way we're doing it. Sure, it picks up a few million uninsured people here and a few million there. There are some ideas that haven't been tried yet that could pick up a few million more. But they don't lead anywhere. None of the step-by-steppers has the "road map" that shows how we're going to get from here to covering all of the 44 million uninsured Americans, or even most of them.

There is a way to fix this, but it's tough medicine: mandates. According to the experts, if we really want to make sure that every single American has affordable health coverage, the country will have to accept some kind of requirements for employers to cover their workers, for individuals to get health coverage for themselves, or both. Other countries have gotten everybody covered in steps rather than all at once, but none of them has done it on a totally voluntary basis.

The Third Rail of Health-care Reform

It's hard for politicians to talk about mandates: Ask Bill Clinton, who tried to require employers to pay for health insurance in 1994, and got creamed. As Gore policy adviser Elaine Kamarck explains, they

DAVID NATHER *covers health care reform for the Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., a public policy news and information publisher in Washington, D.C.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

seem "a little Big Brother-ish." People don't like being told to buy things they don't think they can afford. Sen. John Chafee's proposed alternative to the Clinton healthcare proposal would have required individuals to buy their own insurance (with subsidies for people who couldn't afford it). It didn't fly.

Now, a few brave souls have come back to the idea of individual mandates—but with some new twists. Bill Bradley's campaign proposal would require all parents to get health coverage for their kids and subsidize the ones who can't afford it. Bradley's mandate proposal is part of a broader campaign focus on children. Adults can take care of themselves, but children should be signed up in the hospitals at birth "to make absolutely sure that there is nobody left behind," according to a Bradley adviser.

Other countries that have gotten to universal coverage did it in steps. But their steps were bigger, and they weren't voluntary.

On the other end of the political spectrum, Rep. Bill Thomas, a California Republican, has been talking about a health care plan that would give everyone a tax credit—and require them to buy at least basic health coverage for themselves a kind of personal mandate. His idea is to make people more cost-conscious by putting them in charge of their own coverage, and stop treating different groups of people differently. "Just call them Americans and set up an insurance pool for Americans," he said in an October speech.

Both ideas have a couple of kinks to be worked out. Both have to explain what they would do to people who don't buy coverage. (Bradley's advisers are putting out the word that he has no immediate plans to throw bad parents in jail.) And Thomas has to figure out how to fix the individual health insurance market so people aren't just fending for themselves. The market charges premiums that vary wildly depending on how old people are, where they live, and whether they have any health risk factors.

But what's interesting is that Bradley and Thomas have both concluded that voluntary steps alone can't achieve their objective. You have to think bigger. And health care experts of all ideological stripes tend to agree.

"All you have to do is look at history," said Henry E. Simmons, who served in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare under Presidents Nixon and Ford and now runs the National Coalition on Health Care. If you want a voluntary system to take care of the growing number of uninsured people, he said, "we're heading the wrong way very fast."

Uwe Reinhardt, the Princeton University health economist, says it is "technically impossible to proceed incrementally."

Mark A. Goldberg, a distinguished faculty fellow at the Yale School of Management, says it is "pretty clear that you can't get all the way to universal coverage through purely incremental, voluntary reforms."

And even Gail Shearer, the health policy director at Consumers Union, who recently put out a paper that stressed incremental health care reforms, admits it was written that way out of "political reality" and that "it's certainly not what we want."

Why Steps Don't Work

Still, most reformers are still talking about incremental reforms and that's where the whole effort is in danger of sputtering out. Why? Because incremental health care reform is like squeezing down on a balloon; squeeze down here, and something else pops out over there. All of the voluntary steps we've been trying for the last five years run into three problems: "crowd-out," where you pick up people who already had insurance but think they'll get a better deal with your program; "risk selection," where you split all of the healthy people and stick people into separate groups and the sick people's premiums go through the roof; and large numbers of people you simply don't reach, for a variety of reasons. Every incremental idea presented since 1994 runs into at least one of these walls.

Take the Democratic approach. They want to bring in targeted groups of uninsured people, one at a time. The State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) was the first step. It was never intended to cover all 11 million uninsured children—just the five million in the poorest families. But so far, it hasn't even stopped the bleeding. As of June, it had picked up 1.3 million children. And yet, we still have 11 million uninsured kids. According to the Census

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bureau's figures, there were actually 330,000 more in 1998 than there were in 1997, the year CHIP was created.

No one is calling CHIP a failure. Most think it needs more time, and the Department of Health and Human Services says the program could have 2.7 million kids enrolled by September 2000. But no one is calling it a blazing success story either. Too many kids are slipping through the cracks. Between Medicaid and CHIP, two-thirds of all uninsured children are already eligible for health insurance, according to the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. But they're not enrolled, thanks to poor outreach and states that make it nearly impossible to apply for Medicaid. CHIP should have another 2.6 million children under its wing. Medicaid's track record is even worse—4.7 million uninsured kids are eligible for the program but aren't in it.

Some incremental reforms are big deals in their own right. Adding prescription drug coverage to Medicare would be a huge change, and the Patients' Bill of Rights would affect millions of people in managed care plans. But after CHIP, the group-by-group reform ideas are getting smaller. Letting early retirees buy into Medicare, by the Democrats' own estimates, would help about 400,000 people. Not bad, but not much compared to 44.3 million.

And there's a bigger problem: These are all groups that poll well. How far can you go before you run out of sympathetic groups to cover? The kids were easy. Everybody likes kids. And old people. Low-income adults have a shot (that's the next group in the Gore plan), as long as they're working and have kids. But what about after that? We know who's most likely to be uninsured—the "working poor," part-time workers, young adults, Hispanics, people with little education, and noncitizens—but you can't design these programs by demographic groups. Even if you could figure out how to target the 18-to-24-year-olds, you might have a tough job building political support for it, since they're the group that's most likely to be healthy.

And then there are the people between jobs. Clinton tried to sell Congress a couple of years ago on a pilot program to cover the temporarily unemployed, but he had to drop it because there was no political support for covering people who aren't working. "You can come up with categories, but they're not nearly as politically attractive as the kids," says Henry J. Aaron, an economist at the Brookings Institution.

The Republicans have ideas too. They're not into government programs, so they're pushing tax incentives and small-business pools instead—the idea being that you can help the uninsured just as easily by bringing costs down and making it easier for them or their employers to buy health insurance. But nearly all of their ideas bring the danger of "risk selection," Democrats and other critics say, because they'd work best for people without a lot of health problems.

One Republican idea is "association health plans," a pet project the National Federation of Independent Business has been pushing for years. The idea is to let small businesses pool together and bargain for better health coverage deals. There's "HealthMarts," which would purchase cooperatives and let small businesses offer a menu of health plans to their workers, just as the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program does for federal employees. But both would cut costs by blocking the state laws that spell out all of the benefits a health plan has to offer. If they can escape those state laws and offer fewer benefits, the critics say, they can shut out all of the people who would have needed the other benefits. That goes against the whole idea of insurance, they say, which is to keep all of the healthy and sick people in one pool so the risks average out and the premiums are affordable for everyone.

That's also the knock against medical savings accounts, another big Republican idea that is being tried in a demonstration program. People get to sock away a lot of money, tax-free, and use it to pay for medical care under a catastrophic health insurance policy. The problem with that, the Democrats say, is that the out-of-pocket costs are so high—the minimum deductible is $1,500 for single coverage, $3,000 for families—that the only people who will buy them are people with lots of money or healthy people who don't expect big medical bills.

At the moment, that hasn't been a problem because people aren't exactly breaking down the doors to buy medical savings accounts. As of 1998, only 42,000 people had them, including 10,000 who used to be uninsured. But Republicans say that's because the demonstration program has so many restrictions that nobody would want them.

Tax Credits: A Way Forward?

There is one idea that could, in theory, draw support from both parties. Both sides have been looking at tax credits as an easy way of helping people buy health insurance by putting more money

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

into their hands. Republicans like it because it uses the tax code, not a new government program; Democrats like it because it's a way to subsidize low-income people. Make it a refundable credit, like the Earned Income Tax Credit, and anyone who doesn't owe taxes gets the money as a payment. Work out the administrative kinks, like how to get the money to low-income people when they need it (one solution is to pay the credit to the health insurance carrier instead of the individual), and you've got a way to help the uninsured.

But health insurance is expensive, and researchers say the tax credits won't be very useful to low-income people unless they're big enough to pay for pretty much the whole premium. And they never do. Take Dick Armey's plan. He's introduced a bill that would give families up to $3,000 a year in tax credits to help them buy health insurance. That's more generous than some of the other proposals floating around in Congress. But health insurance can run over $5,000 a year for families, even when they can get it at group rates. The rest is going to have to come out of their pocket, and the bigger the gap, the fewer people will use the credit. According to a study by the Lewin Group, a tax credit that pays for half of the premium would be used by only 7.1 million uninsured people, and it would take an 80 percent tax credit to reach as many as 14.6 million.

Bradley goes farther, assuming he can pay for his proposal. He'd give the poorest families a refundable tax credit of $1,200 for kids and $1,800 for adults, up to $5,000 per family, which would be paid directly to the health plan. Bradley says he'd let them buy into the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, but his tax credit may not be big enough to make that an option; the average premium for family coverage under FEHBP will run $6,300 this year. But it might buy other policies, and it's the most generous proposal out there at the moment. "He's putting real money on the table," said Linda Blumberg, a senior research associate at the Urban Institute. "You don't have to agree with his particular approach to appreciate that he's acknowledging that you can't do this for free."

Still, it's important to note that neither Bradley nor Gore would get all the way to universal coverage. Bradley says 95 percent of Americans would have health coverage under his plan (we're at about 84 percent now), but his advisers admit they haven't figured out how to get the other five percent and are looking for ideas. Gore says he'd get to nearly 90 percent with his incremental plan and claims Bradley would end up at about the same place. But Gore may not be trying to close the entire gap; Kamarck says the plan wouldn't help the relatively small group of upper-income uninsured people, and that the government shouldn't be subsidizing them anyway. Meanwhile, Rep. Thomas still talks about his plan for individual mandates only in the broadest terms, and no one else in Congress is pushing anything that gives the full road map for covering the uninsured. If that's really what they want, everybody has some work to do.

What Other Countries Did

Does health care reform have to be done all at once? Not necessarily, and most survivors of 1994 would say you probably shouldn't do that with a trillion-dollar health care system. So it's important to know that other countries that have gotten to universal coverage did it in steps. But their steps were bigger, and they weren't voluntary.

Germany used a combination of employer and individual mandates. It made everyone below a certain income level join "sickness funds," nonprofit health insurance organizations whose premiums are paid by employers and employees, and then gradually raised the income level. South Korea took 12 years to do it—again, with a combination of employer and individual mandates. It started by requiring all employers with 500 or more workers to provide health insurance, then ratcheted down the size of the companies until all firms with more than 16 workers were providing health coverage. Then it brought the other groups into the system by requiring them to buy health insurance and paying up to half of the costs. Even Canada's single-payer system took a couple of jumps to get into place: first hospital insurance, then coverage for physicians' services.

Unfortunately, none of these examples are likely to be very useful in the current debate. Germany, for example, got started in 1883. South Korea was a repressive regime when it did its reforms—not something you want to use in the talking points. Canada, at least, has a devoted following in this country for its single-payer system, and a number of physicians and consumer groups are still pushing for it. But the public isn't comfortable with it. Blendon's surveys show most Americans like the employer-based health care system. "The public is not ready for single-payer," California consumer advocate Jamie Court said in an October speech—and he's one of the supporters.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The point is, it is possible to have a long-term plan that proceeds in steps, if you make the effort to map it out. That's been the standard in other countries lately, which have taken 10 to 15 years to get to full health coverage, according to Gerard F. Anderson, director of Johns Hopkins University's Center for Hospital Finance and Management. "You don't sort of wake up one day and say you're going to go from zero to 100 percent coverage," said Anderson, who has studied the health care systems in 29 industrialized nations.

Most of this is academic at the moment, because even the incremental ideas aren't going anywhere. And that's another problem with incremental reform. If you thought it would be easier to pass than comprehensive health care reform, think again. The fights are just as big with the bite-sized pieces as they are with the whole thing. Sure, CHIP got through, as did the 1996 law which makes it easier to change jobs and still get health coverage. After that, it's all one big stalemate. Republicans have no interest in the Medicare buy-in, and the Patients' Bill of Rights is stuck in a bitter brawl over the right to sue health plans. Meanwhile, the Republicans keep offering the same menu of association health plans, HealthMarts, and medical savings accounts. And Clinton keeps threatening to veto them.

For the veterans of the 1994 health care debate, this is not a good sign at all. Jay Rockefeller, the Democratic senator who chairs the non-partisan Alliance for Health Reform, sounds frustrated and more than a little bit restless these days. He knows there is nothing close to the consensus or the political will Congress would need to start thinking bigger on health care reform again. But he also knows the smaller steps are not going to get us very far either.

"When we do talk about it, we talk about it incrementally, so you don't generate the energy to deal with any kind of comprehensive health care reform," Rockefeller says. "We're doing incremental reform because it's the only alternative we have. As we try to do incremental reform and fail, it makes the job of doing comprehensive health care reform more difficult."

"You certainly can argue that CHIP was good. You certainly can argue that doing pre-existing conditions and portability was good. Then you kind of run out of good things to say about incremental health care reform."

Incremental health care is like squeezing down on a balloon; squeeze down here and something else pops out over there.

What And What Not To Do

So what will break the deadlock? No one's found the answer yet. But there are some things the health care reformers can do if they really want to find it.

• Set the goal from the beginning. Is it universal coverage, or isn't it? Like Gore's advisers, some would argue that it isn't, since 20 percent of the uninsured make more than $50,000 a year. "That's not a public policy problem," says Grace-Marie Arnett, coordinator of the Consensus Group, a coalition of centrist and conservative health policy researchers. If you're not worried about that group, just say you're going to get the rest and call it a day. But others, like Addington of the American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine, say universal coverage should be the goal and that you have to get everyone to agree on it by making it a theme of the presidential race. If the goal is to cover all of the uninsured, as both Gore and Bradley have said it is, then say it loud and say it proud—and stick to it.

• Have a road map. Instead of saying you're going to cover 90 percent of Americans and figure out how to cover the rest later, figure it out now. There's a lot to work out; besides getting everyone into the system, says Simmons of the National Coalition on Health Care, you have to decide how to bring costs down and improve the quality of health care, since they both have an impact on how many people are uninsured. That's a lot to bite off at one time, but that's the point of having a road map—you figure out how you do it over time. If you don't think it should be done at the federal level, let the states do it; Aaron suggests a CHIP-like approach in which the states would get federal matching funds if they can reach, say, 90 percent coverage by 2005 in whatever way they want. But the point, says Goldberg, is that "we

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

need to have the conversation as to how we finish the job."

• Don't make insurance companies the heavy. That's a lesson Addington says everyone should have learned from 1994. Clinton tried that, and got buried in "Harry and Louise" ads; besides, it would be hard to make the reforms work without them. "I think we have to realize that the insurance companies have to play a part," Addington says.

• Be bipartisan. It sounds like a no-brainer, but then again, this is Washington. This is the lesson Clinton's advisers cite over and over again: If 1994 taught us anything, it's that health care reform doesn't get done unless there's a real give-and-take between both sides. So far, they've been proven right every time. CHIP got through because both parties agreed that children need health coverage, and the portability law got through because it was one of the few reforms from the 1994 effort that everyone could agree on. Just last year, it was a bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights, not any of the Republican alternatives, that got through the House. But now it's stuck because neither Clinton nor the Senate Republicans are budging on the right to sue. And just about every other reform that's backed by only one side has stalled out.

• Don't punish politicians for changing their minds. Another no-brainer? Think about how Washington works. The politicians keep score on wins, losses, and flip-flops—often egged on by overeager staffers—and every reversal becomes a headline because the media can't resist. "If you change your position, everyone assumes it's because somebody got to you or you're weak," Rockefeller says. "It's not because you've learned more about the subject or you've matured." That's especially tragic on health care, which is so complicated and so poorly understood by so many lawmakers. Even CHIP, that motherhood-and-apple-pie program, got stuck in Congress several times in 1997 because of partisan differences on how to pay for it and how rich the benefits should be.

And above all:

• Think big. Without a good, hard kick, the Washington health care crowd will continue doing what it has done for years. Go to conferences, talk about old favorites like the Patients' Bill of Rights or medical savings accounts, argue about whether they will cause the earth to crash into the sun, and leave. And then come back the next year at the same time and talk about the same things. "If we want to make any substantial progress," says Goldberg, "we need to do some fairly dramatic things."

Otherwise, we'll all be reading the same stories about the uninsured in another five years and wondering why nothing ever changed. ●

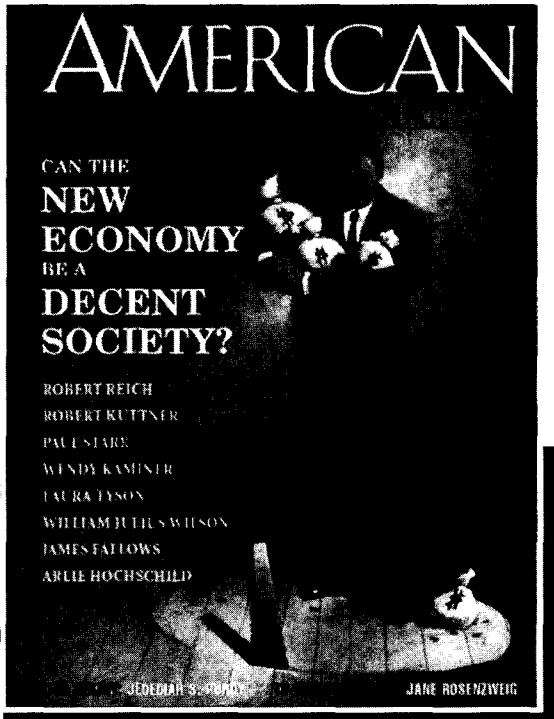
Write for us!

[illegible] worked in government, you probably have [illegible] about how it could be improved. Why not [illegible] with our readers? We're seeking first person acc[illegible] inside the system that will help shed light on [illegible] and what doesn't in American government.

[illegible] Thompson or Stephen Pomper by phone (202-462-0128), fax (202-332-84[illegible] [illegible]ashingtonmonthly.com) or mail (1611 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 4A, Wash[illegible] [illegible] information.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NO ONE'S EVER PLAYED LEFT FIELD BETTER.



The American Prospect has long been a must-read for devoted fans of the national pastime of politics. But now it's a whole new ballgame. America's best progressive magazine is now publishing every other week, with more big-league articles on politics, policy, and culture than ever before. To subscribe, call 1-888-MUST-READ

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Where were they in 1969?

We all know what the four leading presidential candidates did during the Vietnam War. John McCain, the undisputed hero of the group, spent five years in a North Vietnamese prison. Al Gore was one of two men in his Harvard class to volunteer for a tour in Vietnam, where he served as a reporter attached to an engineering unit. Bill Bradley joined the Air Force Reserve in New Jersey so he could play for the New York Knicks. And George W. Bush joined the Texas Air National Guard.

Of the four candidates, Bush's station during the war has been scrutinized most critically. Perhaps this is because — unlike Bradley — Bush maintains that he did not join the Guard in order to avoid the draft. In a recent New York Times *op-ed, however, Winston Groom (the author of* Forrest Gump *and a former member of the Army Reserves who was called to active duty in Vietnam) wrote that:*

> I imagine that Governor Bush is stunned to learn that his voluntary enlistment as a fighter pilot with the Air National Guard might be considered a stain on his record. A fighter plane is not a Gulfstream jet, and flying one is a dangerous and difficult job that requires skill and courage ...
>
> Those who degrade all military service except actual combat duty perpetuate a slur against hundreds of thousands of men and women who served during Vietnam and other wars. Having a strong Reserve, National Guard and Coast Guard has been the backbone of American military strategy in this century...
>
> Anyone who enters any branch of the armed forces is subject to instant call-up in time of war — something the Pentagon made full use of in the Persian Gulf war eight years ago. The fact that most reservists and National Guardsmen were not ordered to Vietnam does not mean they could have avoided combat duty had the president called them up. All of which makes Governor Bush's wartime record just as "real" as mine or anyone else's.

Groom's op-ed called to mind a piece that Adam Hochschild wrote for this magazine in 1971 describing his own experiences as an Army Reservist. Hochschild was a near contemporary of Bush's and Bradley's, so his article sheds light on what their experiences must have been like. Read the following excerpt and decide for yourself whether it is fair to conclude, as Groom does, that, "Bush's wartime record [is] just as 'real' as ... anyone else's."

Excerpted from

Reserves and Guard: A More Selective Service

First published in The Washington Monthly, *January, 1971*

By Adam Hochschild

In the Civil War days, if you didn't want to be drafted, you could "buy a man" for $300 to take your place in the Army. You can also avoid the draft today, though things are more indirect—instead of paying $300, you can join the Reserves or the National Guard. As long as this escape valve exists for a million privileged men, most of President Nixon's reforms to democratize the draft are meaningless.

The Reserve and the Guard are much easier to be in than the regular Army. First, they usually don't send you to Vietnam; second, you're on full-time active duty for only four and one half months, which disrupts your marriage, career, and friendships far less than

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

being drafted for two whole years. For these reasons, when I was 21, I enlisted in the Army Reserve rather than wait to be drafted.

An enlisted man must join the Reserve or the Guard for a six-year hitch. After those initial few months of active duty training, you go to a two-week camp each summer, and to weekly drills during the year. Theoretically, the weekly drills in your hometown Reserve or Guard unit keep up your training.

When I first joined, I spent several of those drills being processed, paid and promoted. All around me the same was happening to most of the unit's other 500-odd officers and men. I somehow thought this was a deliberate lull to catch up on administrative paperwork, and that the regular program would start in a few weeks. But it never did. Eventually I realized my Reserve unit did virtually nothing but administer itself.

Each drill began with recorded bugle calls played over a loudspeaker, and then sundry saluting and marching about on the small San Francisco Army base where we met. Then the 500 soldiers, with much shouting of commands and waving of clipboards, were sent indoors and divided up for work into more than a dozen different "sections" for what was called "on-the-job training."

One section checked through the sign-in rosters, and sent threatening letters to people who missed a meeting (if you miss five meetings, you get sent to active duty); another promoted people; another issued everybody's paychecks; a truly enormous section with yards of desks and typewriters kept the personnel files in order. Still another section processed men into the unit, while a subgroup processed them out. A section of Military Policemen patrolled the building to make sure no one escaped from all this. (They weren't always successful. One evening three friends and I got out, saw a movie downtown, and came back to the drill in time to sign out. Others, still bolder, did this kind of thing regularly.) Another section dispensed paper and typewriters and mimeograph ink; another prepared coffee and doughnuts for the refreshment break. As the unit grew new jobs flowered: one section set up interoffice telephones and another provided a messenger service to carry papers between all the sections.

Surviving the Boredom

A number of mechanisms used up excess time. One was lesson plans. Every time somebody gives an Army class, he must turn in a "lesson plan"—a long outline, in a special format, of what he said. However, in my own section of the unit, and I believe in most of the others, there were no classes: Everyone was too busy either doing the administrative paperwork or trying to get out of it. But regulations called for classes, so we had to write out lesson plans each week—outlines of classes never given. We turned in the lesson plans quarterly to another section, which kept people busy tabulating them. Visiting generals could then be shown proof of all the training we were getting.

There were also the movies. Unit members who could not be kept busy in the sections were sent to a large auditorium. There, they were usually shown Army films, with the same film often shown many times over the years. Occasionally there were movies on things like first aid or safe driving, but most were much farther afield. I remember one documentary about Greenland (huskies, ice, fjords, and freedom-loving Eskimos), and one ancient Air Force film, in an extra-ordinary reddish-brown no-man's-land between black and white and color, about "Survival in the Tundra."

For all its insanity, going through this charade each week is preferable to being shot at in Vietnam, which is why Reserve units have huge waiting lists. (Each armed force has its Reserve; the most important are the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard, to which nearly 700,000 of the country's one million paid Reservists belong). Men whose draft notices are about to arrive are sometimes so desperate to join the Reserve that they pay. In New York City alone, there have been half a dozen cases in recent years where Reserve or Guard officials have been arrested and accused of accepting bribes to enlist people. One Chicago National Guard sergeant was charged with letting men into his unit at a price of over $500 apiece.

Only the Right People

Competition to get into the Reserve and Guard is heavy, and the privileged usually win. Defense Department figures show the percentage of college graduates among Army Reserve enlisted men is nearly three times as high as among draftees and enlistees of the regular Army, who do the fighting in Vietnam. In my own unit, most members were attorneys, stockbrokers, insurance agents, students, or executive trainees. A number of people had been fraternity brothers in college. At drills men talked about ski trips, stock tips, and M.B.A.s.

All of this is far different from the World War II Army, where the Hollywood myths had a little truth and rich and poor actually sometimes did fight together. Now the split between the Reserves and the regu-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lar Army intensifies the class divisions in the country rather than lessening them.

Besides being unjust, all this matters politically. If the sons of the influential were being killed in Vietnam at the same rate as the sons of black people and the often pro-war white working class, pressure to stop the war would be enormously stronger. An anti-war movement of upper-middle-class college student has already put something of a dent in the Administration's war plans. If this class of men had been forced to do the actual fighting, instead of being able to join Reserve units, their protests might well have stopped the war. The Pentagon must be grateful for the Reserves and Guard, a system that keeps so many of these men out of Vietnam.

Reserve and National Guard units are not supposed to have such an elite clientele. With some exceptions, the law says units are supposed to enlist new members first-come first-served. Theoretically you can't get in until your name comes to the top of the long waiting list. But in practice, it doesn't work that way. As with all things in the military, it takes lots of paperwork to enlist somebody. So when you want to get a friend in, or when you want to keep someone out, you slow it down until he gets drafted.

I know this often happens, because I'm guilty of having taken advantage of it twice. When I joined my unit, I was able to jump over the heads of a sizable backlog of other applicants because a friend of a friend knew a high-ranking officer. A year later I was able to get a close friend in my unit in a hurry, I was told quite frankly: "We wouldn't do it except that he's a friend of yours."

Most Reservists and National Guardsmen are guilty of the same practice. In almost every unit, sons, brothers, in-laws, and former college classmates abound. There are also lots of certain kinds of people whom everybody wants to know—such as professional athletes. We had several San Francisco Giants and Forty-Niners; a 1967 survey disclosed 360 pro athletes in Reserve and Guard units around the country.

Another way the Reserves' and the Guard's class nature shows is that they are virtually all white. San Francisco is roughly one-seventh black, but except for pro ballplayers, my unit had only three blacks out of 500 men. The unit I was in before that drilled a few blocks from downtown Oakland, one of the largest black ghettoes in the western United States, yet we had no black members at all. In the National Guard, things are worse: The proportion of blacks in the Guard actually declined during 1969 from 1.18 to 1.15 percent.

Vigilant Nostalgia

This escape valve for upper-middle-class draft-avoiders is not only unjust, but colossally expensive. In 1969, my old unit cost the U.S. taxpayers $300,000 in salaries alone. Nationally, this adds up. The total Reserve and Guard budget is $2.5 billion a year. There are also certain additional costs, such as the hefty pensions paid retired Reservists and Guardsmen. And altogether the two organizations own approximately $10 billion worth of real estate, armories, airplanes, tanks, guns, ships, and other equipment.

The Reserves and Guard help draft-avoiders, and help the Army by keeping such men out of Vietnam, but they have no other military use whatever—either for defense or for our adventures in Southeast Asia, the Dominican Republic and elsewhere. The best proof of this is that the U.S. is fighting the fourth largest war in its history, Vietnam, almost without them. Approximately 35,000, many of them fliers, were mobilized briefly after the Pueblo incident, but they are all home now. Otherwise there have been no Reserve or Guard units in Vietnam.

Though the Reserves and Guard provided a good deal of manpower for World War II, in the 1970's America doesn't need a reserve land army of 700,000 men for its "defense." And in the days of ICBM's and ground-to-air missiles, the Air National Guard's expensive jet fighters, manned round-the-clock at 22 bases throughout the country, are about as necessary as horse cavalry.

A Sorry System

The cost is one reason for ending the Reserves and the Guard: Vietnam is the other. It is a sorry system: The poor and the blacks fight the war; the courageous of all classes go to jail as draft resisters; the privileged join the Reserves or the Guard. Eliminating that escape valve from the draft would not only be just, it would help end the war. People with power in America have shown themselves little moved by the deaths of Vietnamese and of the U.S. troops there now. If their own sons were there, things might be different. Now, the sons of senators and corporation presidents are more likely to be in Reserve or Guard units than on patrol in Vietnam. It is harder to talk calmly of just "slowly winding down" the war if your own boy is in it. This alone should make elimination of the Reserves and the Guard an urgent goal for all who care about stopping this war and preventing the next. ●

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Memo of the Month

PLEASE SUPPORT
RUDY GIULIANI

From: Z173

I am hoping to hear from you no later than November 29th.

White House Office Wh034
Exec Office of Pres
Who 196 Oeob-Speechwrite
Washington, DC 20502-0001

Thank you so much for your support! Rudy

Dear Rudy,

I agree. Your battle with Hillary Rodham Clinton to be the next U.S. Senator from New York is not just another race between two people. It's a battle between two very different visions for America.

Please count me as the newest Founding Member of FRIENDS OF GIULIANI. To help you raise the $15,000,000 to $20,000,000 you will need to match Mrs. Clinton's enormous campaign warchest, I am enclosing:

☐$1000 ☐$500 ☐$100 ☐$50 ☐$25 ☐$15 ☐other $_____

Please write your check to: FRIENDS OF GIULIANI

Signed:_____ Date:_____

Question: Would you like to be invited to meet with Rudy when he travels to the Washington, DC area?

☐Yes ☐No

Federal Law requires political committees to use their best efforts to report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of $200 in a calendar.

Name:_____

Address:_____

City, State, Zip:_____

Occupation:_____ Employer:_____

Phone Number:_____ Fax Number:_____

Your E-Mail Address:_____

Corporate contributions are not allowed to be accepted by this committee. If this contribution is used by a declared candidate for federal office, the maximum contribution is $1,000 per individual for the primary election and $1,000 per individual for the general. Partnership contributions are also limited to $1,000 per election and a letter allocating the contribution among partners must accompany each contribution. Political contributions are not deductible for federal income tax purposes.

Authorized and paid for by Friends of Giuliani. A-005

59 Maiden Lane, 15th Floor • New York, NY 10038-4502

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Medicine Wheel

A federal program that actually works

By Esther Pan

Fifteen years ago on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation, a call to the police about domestic violence wouldn't have come to much. The tribal police would have been surly and reluctant, if dispatched at all. Police had to personally witness an act of violence in order to do anything. As one officer says, reflecting back, "If I knocked on the door and some guy came to the door and said everything's okay, I would've left."

Confronted by the same situation a few months ago, the same officer refused to leave. Explaining, "I need to talk to everyone else in the house," he pushed in over the man's protest and saw children crouched on the living room floor. "I wouldn't have seen them before," he says. "I had to be taught to look." Entering the bedroom, he saw a huddled figure so bloody and bruised it barely looked human. Then she lifted her head. It was a woman whose husband had been beating her for two days. "Thank God," she choked out. "You're the angel I've been praying for."

Thanks to a strikingly original social program, more and more women on the Pine Ridge reservation have had their prayers for deliverance from abuse answered. Cangleska, Inc., a 13-year-old violence prevention and treatment program founded by and for Oglala Sioux Indians in southwestern South Dakota, has achieved dramatic results in reducing domestic violence. The program has incorporated traditional culture and the strengths of the Native American community to not only stop abusers, but to rehabilitate them so they can rejoin their families and community. In so doing, Cangleska has earned recognition as one of the most innovative government programs in the country, winning, most recently, an Innovations in Government award from the Ford Foundation and Harvard University.

The History

In the traditional culture of the Oglala Sioux (also called Lakota), women were highly honored. Domestic violence was considered a crime against the tribe. Men who beat their wives and children were held to be unfit to lead their families. But when soldiers and settlers arrived west in the 1800s, the tragic saga of the Native American began. Despite valiant struggles, the descendants of Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, and Black Elk now live on bleak stretches of dusty land in the center of the United States, intimately familiar with alcoholism and violence.

Domestic violence had become just another fixture in Pine Ridge's landscape of despair. The average annual income is $3,400. The unemployment rate is 84 percent. Over 70 percent of Lakota adults are alcoholics. A Department of Justice report released in February found that Native Americans are twice as likely to be victims of violent crime than any other group. They have the highest suicide rates in the nation. They are twice as likely as any other ethnic group to be arrested for an alcohol-related offense, and four times more likely to spend time in jail. Most troubling of all, Native American women are at the bottom of the lowest trough: The Justice Department report found that the level of violent crime experienced by American Indian women is nearly 50 percent higher than that reported by black males.

On Pine Ridge, domestic violence, complicated and augmented by all the other problems, finally grew too widespread to ignore. In 1987 tribal elders convened a meeting to address the issue. One after another, women stood up to describe the terror of being battered: of never knowing when the explosion would come, of nights spent sleeping with their children in abandoned cars, or begging policemen to put them in jail so their husbands couldn't beat them that night.

As a result of that meeting, the tribe adopted a Spousal Abuse Code, one of the strictest in the nation, which made it illegal to assault an intimate partner and mandated arrest with no bond and automatic sentencing for offenders. The tide began to turn.

Esther Pan *is a staff writer for* Newsweek.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Program

Cangleska (chan-GLAY-shka) was founded shortly after that 1987 meeting by Marlin Mousseau, a respected member of the tribe and a former batterer, and Karen Artichoker, the current director. George Twist, a former tribal police officer, rounds out the organization's leadership. Besides providing shelter, intervention, and legal aid for battered women, Cangleska also focuses on retraining batterers to act out anger in other ways. The aim is to rehabilitate abusers, not just stop them for the moment.

Cangleska means "medicine wheel" in the Lakota language: a sacred object that reflects the looker's true self back at him. By introducing Native American ideas of spirituality and tribal togetherness, Mousseau, who heads the men's program, says he tries to get abusive men to see themselves as they are: scared, insecure, jealous, and controlling. Only then can there be progress. "You have to look in the mirror to change," he says. When the program started out, many opposed it. Tribal members objected to the idea that the police and courts were going to get involved in private family matters. But the program pushed the traditional collective responsibility of the Lakota. "Actually," says Artichoker, "it's a western concept that the family is private and what happens behind closed doors is off limits."

Today, the program has a staff of 15—many of them former abusers or victims—and consults to over 550 Native American tribes on combating domestic violence. A Cangleska shelter, opened in 1997, has helped over 700 women and children. In the dust of the reservation, Cangleska is breaking ground for a new residence to house women who have left abusive homes. It offers hope and affirmation for people who have traditionally had very little of either.

The Rez

It's hard for most Americans to conceive of what life is like on an Indian reservation in the poorest county in America. Sarah Buel, director of University of Texas School of Law's Domestic Violence Clinic, was the site visitor to Pine Ridge for the Ford/Harvard Innovations in Government Committee. "It was just mind-boggling the extent of the poverty there," she says. "It's isolated—over two hours from Rapid City—and once you hit the reservation it's obvious immediately that you're someplace neglected. The paved road stops, and turns into bumpy, hilly dirt roads, most of them impassable in winter. There are junked-up cars all over the place. It's just such horrendous, abject poverty and unemployment." As Artichoker says, "Even though we call ourselves a sovereign nation, we're economically dependent."

Buel says most people can't even afford the basics. "There's an extraordinary housing shortage," she says. "And nobody has the money to get even a down payment for a trailer. Say it's $400—that's prohibitive. So there are rundown, beat-up houses everywhere. The HUD housing is of substandard quality and clustered close together even though there's plenty of land. All the people have been pushing for them to be built farther apart because so many studies show that conflict worsens in tight quarters. But the Federal agencies—HUD, FEMA, Bureau of Indian Affairs—decided it would be cheaper this way. All the sewage systems would be close."

"That's just another example," Buel adds, "of the many conflicts that arise between Lakota tradition and what the people want and the Feds. That's why it's so important with Cangleska that it was started and is run by people there."

The Extent of the Problem

Domestic violence, once punishable by death and banishment among the Oglala Sioux, is currently an endemic problem at Pine Ridge. Norma Rendon, a Cangleska staff member, says, "If I had 10 girlfriends in a room together, probably all 10 are or have been abused by their husbands." She reconsiders, then adds, "Actually, I have one friend whose husband doesn't beat her. But her first husband did."

Both of Norma's husbands beat her; the second threw her down the stairs when she was pregnant with her fifth child. "He just had so much anger," she says. "There wasn't really a pattern. No matter what I did, he would get mad. The best thing I could do was be quiet. At least if I was quiet I could try to find a way to get away."

She stayed with him longer than she should have, Norma says, because she wanted her kids to be raised by both parents. "And I loved him," she says quietly. "I still love him." She explains the paradoxical appeal: "If you've been abandoned as a child, and then here's this man who, because he's such a big bully, will protect you from anything, you'll go back." But in the end she left, because "I wanted a better life for my children than what I had for myself."

A recent Cangleska client wanted the same thing—yet leaving abusive spouses is not only difficult but sometimes life-threatening. Rendon says this woman was "so afraid that she went to three different states. I couldn't get her to come into the shelter. She was probably running for about a week." The woman was abjectly terrified of her husband. "He'll find me," she sobbed. "He'll come and kill all of us. He'll kill you, and every-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

body there."

When she finally came in, her bruises were so bad they hadn't faded after seven days. "There were huge knots on the childrens' heads," Rendon says. "Bruises all over their bodies, but no broken bones. He was pretty intelligent—most of their contusions were places people couldn't see them."

Marlin Mousseau knows what it's like to make a woman that scared. And he knows exactly how to talk to abusive husbands because he used to be one. Born and raised on the reservation, he met his wife, an Oneida from Wisconsin, in college. They married when he was 22. Problems started quickly. "I was real jealous," he says. "That was my biggest problem, jealousy of other men. I got so's I'd be jealous of Tom Selleck when she watched 'Magnum P.I.'"

Mousseau says the punches were nothing compared to the emotional, spiritual, even cultural punishment he gave his wife. "I'd tell her her tribe was no good," he says. "Or I'd threaten to take the kids away, saying 'You're on my reservation and I know the judges.' Or I'd say 'If you leave me bad things will happen to you because I'm a [sacred] pipe carrier.'" After he knocked her tooth out while she was pregnant, she moved out and got a restraining order to keep him away. Suddenly alone, Mousseau says he "turned to our spiritual leaders and teachings that I wasn't ready to listen to before." He spent two days praying and experienced an epiphany: "I was put in her place, and experienced the fear and feelings of being a victim." He determined to turn his life around. Four months later, he and his wife were reconciled. This August they celebrated their 22nd wedding anniversary.

Who's Who

By Susan Threadgill

Ari Fleischer, who was **Elizabeth Dole**'s spokesperson until her campaign folded, has joined **George W. Bush**'s team. He follows **David Beckwith**, who briefly served as Bush's spokesperson but was shown the exit after tangling with Communications Director **Karen Hughes** who, along with **Karl Rove** and **Joe Allbaugh**, makes up the Big Three of W.'s staff.

If **Hillary Clinton** decides to bail out of the New York Senate race, there could be a **Kennedy** family fight over who replaces her as the Democratic candidate. **Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.** and his sister Kerry's husband, **Andrew Cuomo**, are among the possible successors.

Former Congressman **Tim Penny**, much admired by Capitol Hill moderates during his tenure in the House, is said to be leaning toward running against Sen. **Rod Grams** in Minnesota.

A friend of ours has a brother who was in Skull and Bones at Yale. This is the secret society **George W. Bush** belonged to. The brother recently got this note from the Skull and Bones command center: "In view of the political happenings in the barbarian world, I feel compelled to remind all of the tradition of privacy and confidentiality essential to the well being of our Order and strongly urge stout resistance to the seductions and blandishments of the Fourth Estate." Translated we think this adds up to: "Don't tattle on W."

The word on **Lincoln Chafee**, who has succeeded his father, **John Chafee** as senator from Rhode Island, is that "he's a chip off the old block." This comes from **Darrell West**, a professor of political science at Brown, who tells *The Hill*'s **Robert Schlesinger**: "He votes like his dad, socially moderate, fiscally conservative, and a strong environmentalist." Sen. **Slade Gorton**, chairman of the Republican Committee on Committees, has already indicated that Chafee will get a a subcommittee chairmanship on the Environmental and Public Works Committee.

For environmentalists, that's the good news from the Senate. The bad news is that the Environment and Public Works Committee will be chaired by either Sen. **Robert C. Smith**, the New Hampshire Republican who recently left the party because it wasn't conservative enough, and then returned when thoughts of committee chairmanships began to dance in his head, or by Sen. **James M. Inhofe** who is considered even less friendly by environmentalists. According to **Adam Clymer** of *The New York Times*, The League of Conservation Voters, which rated John Chafee as correct in 70 percent of his votes, gave Smith a score of 36 percent. Inhofe got only seven percent.

How bureaucratic is the CIA? Director **George W. Tenet** recently gave a hint when in a speech to his fellow spooks he com-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

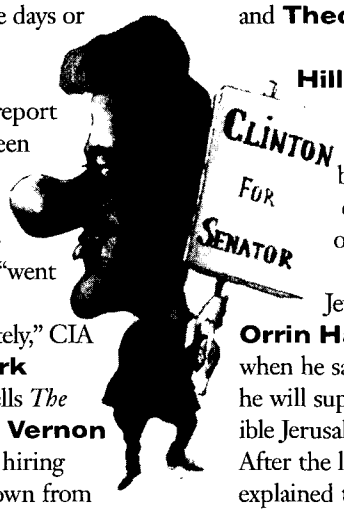
The Money

Cangleska is a culturally-based social service program funded by the federal government. Lest we lose sight of the fact that sometimes government programs do actually work, and our tax dollars can be used to make life safer, cleaner, better, or more efficient, there's the Innovations in Government Program. Founded in 1986 and run by the Ford Foundation, Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, and the Council for Excellence in Government, the Innovations program receives some 1,600 applications a year: visiting nurse programs, urban renewal programs, welfare reform programs, programs that give disabled people low-interest loans to buy cars. The variety and scope of the programs, from all corners of the country, is tremendous and heartening. "We want to recognize when government is efficient, smart, or amazing," says Elaine Kamarck, the program's director.

The Innovations staff of four spends almost a full year narrowing the field to 100 candidates, which are farmed out to committees of policy experts who will whittle the list down to 25 semifinalists evaluated by a 15-member panel loaded with politicians and policy experts. Finally, representatives of the 25 semifinalists are flown to Washington, where they present their own merits rally-clock style before the assembled committee.

There's a lot at stake. The $100,000 prize for each of the 10 winners could make a small program. (The Council of Excellence in Government, the third partner in the program, administers the grant money and tracks its use; it's intended for programs to expand existing operations and encourage others to reproduce their success.)

plained: "It's unacceptable that it takes an average of eight months to bring on a new hire. And it's outrageous that when you're laid low with the flu, you've got to get a written letter from your doctor if you're gone three days or more."



We're happy to report that Tenet has been able to get some changes made. The doctor's letter requirement "went out the window almost immediately," CIA spokesman **Mark Mansfield** tells *The Washington Post*'s **Vernon Loeb**. And the hiring time has gone down from eight months to six. That still seems a trifle long, doesn't it? Wouldn't the best applicants be snapped up by other employers in that time?

Speaking of the New Frontier, guess which president **John McCain** was most effusive about in an Exeter, New Hampshire town meeting reported by *The Washington Post*'s **Howard Kurtz**. It was **John Kennedy**. McCain also spoke warmly about **Harry Truman** and **Franklin D. Roosevelt** before getting around to a few kind words about fellow Republicans **Ronald Reagan** and **Theodore Roosevelt**.

Hillary Clinton has been accused of currying favor with Jewish voters by supporting an undivided Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. But in a recent speech to the Republican Jewish Coalition, Sen. **Orrin Hatch** did her one better, when he said that if elected president he will support a "united and indivisible Jerusalem as the capital of Utah." After the laughter died down, Hatch explained the slip showed that "We in Utah feel very deeply about Israel."

Our pal, **Al Kamen**, got his hands on the itinerary for a congressional trip to South Africa. If you've wondered why these trips are often referred to as junkets, consider this schedule for one led by Congressman **Richard C. Pombo** and including six other Republican stalwarts such as **Helen Chenoweth-Hage** of Idaho and **James V. Hansen** of Utah. (We're surprised he didn't go to Israel instead.) The first stop is in Kamen's words, "the magnificent Kruger National Park," arriving at the lodge in time for a night "game drive." At 11 a.m. there's time for "shopping." Noon to 4 p.m.: "Lunch and Rest." 4 p.m.: Game drive. 6:30 p.m.: Reception and dinner. Then comes Victoria Falls with a 3:45 p.m. arrival just in time for "walking tour/boat ride." Another "game drive" comes the next day followed by a "working dinner." Then it's off to the "lovely Mowana Lodge in Kasane," and then the trip back home in time for everyone to recover from the exertion of that "working dinner."

How good are those TV pundits at predicting the political future? *Brill's Content* recently tracked their predictions over a six-month period and found that the winner was *The Wall Street Journal*'s **Al Hunt**. Tied for second were **Eleanor Clift** and **Tony Blankley**, followed by **Mark Shields**, **Robert Novak**, and **Margaret Carlson**. Guess who was the worst? **John McLaughlin**.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And then there's the recognition: After Cangleska was honored, Mousseau says many people on the reservation told him how proud they were. "We represented the whole Lakota nation by accepting that award," he says gravely.

Why It Works

There are many reasons for Cangleska's success:

• Respected men on the reservation are active participants. "If you're in George [Twist's] program and you beat up your wife again, he'll send you up the mountain for a three-day fast and the men in the town make sure you stay up there," says Buel. "Cangleska is a phenomenal example of having men in the community saying 'we are not going to allow this.'" The police officer quoted in the opening paragraph agrees: "I probably couldn't have heard it from a woman," he says about the violence training. "I needed someone like George to say, 'If we're men on this reservation we have to stop this.'"

• The tribal council and courts—the authorities on the reservation—support the program. "It's very powerful when you have a court saying, 'You will not harm this woman,'" says Artichoker. Cangleska has also convinced the community that domestic violence is not part of the Lakota tradition, and therefore unacceptable. But getting that respect took 13 years. "We've been accused of moving all the women off the reservation," Artichoker says. (Cangleska routinely helps women go to other states to find jobs.) "I told them they should do a better job of making it safe for women to stay."

• The tribal police have been retrained. Cangleska has taught over 100 police officers how to approach a domestic conflict situation and take charge. "We're finding that police officers are taking their own journey," says Artichoker. "It's gratifying for law enforcement to see the results of counseling, instead of making the same arrests over and over." Now, says Buel, the reservation's nine police substations really "enforce the law. If they think a crime has been committed, they'll arrest now, which is what every victim is entitled to."

• Cangleska has redefined existing domestic violence laws and pushed for tough new ones. The tribe's Spousal Abuse Code came on the heels of the federal Violence Against Women Act. The tribe's probation office now enforces both, to make sure that batterers either get counseling or go to jail. The tribe's law is actually tougher than the federal one: Under the Spouse Abuse Act, it is illegal not only to cause physical harm, but to threaten it as well.

• Cangleska has surmounted all the immediate barriers that stop women on the reservation from getting help, including transportation, day care, legal help and job training. "The reservation is so big and so isolated that women with no car and no money often give up," says Buel. "They feel like they can't escape." Cangleska organizes carpools to other cities for court appearances, school or job training. They watch the kids while women work or look for jobs. The full-time staff attorney gets restraining orders, files for divorce, and helps victims keep custody of their children, the biggest worry for most divorcing mothers. And a full range of programs including literacy, tribal college and even acupuncture classes help women learn salable skills and recover from the stress of abuse.

Why They Won

Cangleska's resolve and originality impressed everyone on the Innovations selection committee. Buel raves about Artichoker, Mousseau, and Twist: "They're such amazing, devoted, committed people. You spend any time in their presence and you are just blown away," she says. "These guys have tackled every obstacle. They just didn't give up. They created something that met all of their needs."

David Gergen, chair of the selection committee, praises the program for using federal money combined with local initiative to better the lot of the Oglala Sioux. "We were all impressed with the fact that this was a huge departure for an Indian tribe," he says. "This is a self-help program. The whole notion that you could change something so fundamental as internal family dynamics in an entrenched culture, how men regarded women, was very inspirational."

But for all their progress, Mousseau knows there is a very long way to go. "A lot of us realize that [we won't see] healthy and normal ways among our people... in our lifetime," he says. He pauses, then adds, "But we have to think about the seventh generation." Still, the program now consults to 500 other Indian reservations and the ideas are spreading. In the tortured history between the federal government and the Native American tribes, this might be the first program started for and by Indians which uses federal and private funds to help them succeed.

Still, Artichoker agrees that it's not easy. "It'll take all of our values as Native people to keep us strong, keep moving forward," she says. "But if I didn't think it would work, I wouldn't be here, raising my children. We have to teach people that this is not who we are as Lakota people. This is not how the Creator intended us to be with each other." ●

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Presidential Aptitude Test

What you really need to know to pick a president.

By Stephen Pomper and Nicholas Thompson

Campaign fatigue. There's almost a year left in Campaign 2000 and we've already got it bad. In a November poll by Harvard University, twice as many potential voters described the presidential campaign as "uninformative" as called it "informative." Nearly two-thirds of those polled also found the campaign "boring."

Maybe that's because the media seem to find it boring too. Instead of looking for provocative angles on the issues that matter, too many reporters have been distracted by peripheral issues or allowed themselves to arrive at the premature conclusion that the candidates are all the same.

You could see this theme percolating on the fringes of respectable journalism as early as July when Arianna Huffington observed that, "In a sense we now have one corporate party. We have the pro-life corporate party and the pro-choice corporate party..."

The *National Journal* then picked up the ball in October with a cover that depicted Al Gore morphing into George Bush and back again and a story titled "Gush and Bore" which ruefully proclaimed: "The nation's two political parties have become so much alike that they don't really stand for much any more."

And just after Thanksgiving, *The New York Times'* Richard Berke weighed in that "the public's impression of candidates may be more important than ever in the campaign of 2000 because there is a dearth of raging issues dividing the parties."

Now whose fault is that?

There's at least the potential for interesting debate on the issues. Everybody knows that Al Gore has written a passionate book about the environment, that Bill Bradley has proposed to reinvent health care, that John McCain wants to grab every Senator and hang him upside down until the change falls out of his pockets—and that George W. Bush seems happy to scramble around on the floor to scarf it up.

If that's all true, how can these guys really be the same?

The answer is that, of course, they're not. Sameness is a convenient fiction. It allows reporters to write fun softball pieces that distinguish the candidates on less than substantive grounds. They can even try on new professions like Walter Mitty. For example, in November, *National Review's* Richard Brookhiser channeled the spirit of Sigmund Freud to arrive at the conclusion that Al Gore is "depressed because he feels dead" and that this explains his focus on the environment. And *U.S. News and World Report's* Roger Simon recently took a turn as *CNN* fashion reporter Elsa Klensch to slash away at Bill Bradley for affecting suits that "look like they cost the lives of several polyesters" and shirts "of a bluish hue not found in nature." The guy wears bad clothes and wants to be our president? Imagine.

Let's be clear: We don't expect the campaign press to spend the next eleven months performing regression analyses on the candidates' budget proposals. Of course the public is entitled to learn something about the personal qualities of the man who will occupy the most powerful office on the planet. But it's surely a stretch from this to the position that campaign strategy on matters like wardrobe is the same thing as campaign news. And there's a real problem with giving too much air-time to silly stuff: It crowds out attention to the more important issues and leaves the public unprepared to sort through them when the mud starts flying. Indeed, shallow coverage of the issues is almost an invitation for campaigns to take the low road. Read what a Gore staffer said to *U.S. News'* Simon:

"Bradley has authenticity? O.K., so he's real, he's a great guy, he's the thinking man's candidate. But most voters don't vote that way. Everybody says negative ads are terrible and trashing somebody is terrible—but it works!... The brie-and-cheese [sic] set, the thinking voters will always be there, and they'll be for Bradley. But heat wins elections, and Gore is going to put the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

heat on Bradley."

More than anything, that's an indictment of the press. After all, it's part of our job to help transform voters into "thinking voters." And the best way to do that is to hammer away at the issues.

Here's one attempt to do just that on a short list of issues that matter the most: How will the candidate pay for good government? Will he protect the uninsured? How will he save social security? Will he really be an education president? Will he be able to handle an international crisis? Will he fix our environmental laws? Is he in favor of auctions or elections? Can he run the government? In the spirit of competition, we've given the four leading candidates grades on each question. We gave points for the political courage, technical competence, and vision. Did we give extra credit for wearing natural fibers? Not a chance.

How will he pay for good government?

Government costs money. You've got to pay for air-traffic controllers, national infrastructure projects, and funding the Center for Disease Control. We've got to have an army; we've got to pay government lawyers to fight monopolies. We need billions of dollars to fix our health-care system and billions more to hire and train the teachers we need to turn our educational system around.

To many politicians in 1999, the budget surplus is the solution to funding everything the government needs to, and should, pay for. New health-care system? We'll fund it out of the projected surplus. How about a middle-class tax cut? Just dip into that big tub of hypothetical cash.

But all this talk of surplus financing is misleading. Roughly two-thirds of the projected surplus comes from excess Social Security revenues that will have to be locked away for the day when the trust fund starts to run in the red. (See "How will he save social security?") As for the remaining third, we're not holding our breaths. For it to materialize, Congress will have to honor uncomfortably tight spending caps that it can easily blow through using accounting tricks, the economy will have to continue to perk along, and Medicare costs will have to stay under control.

You can't count on the surplus any more than you can count on Congress to keep its budget promises or the economy to stay strong. So, to run the government and to pay for the programs the candidates are proposing, the next administration will probably have to close tax loopholes, raise taxes, or both. Given their likelihood, we should be thinking about these options now.

Start with the loopholes: The tax code is riddled with subsidies that cost billions of dollars a year. Businessmen enjoy tax-deductible meals and entertainment to the annual tune of six billion tax-payer dollars; an 1872 law allows mining companies to purchase federal land for $5 an acre without having to pay any royalties back to the government; investors can rack up tax-free capital gains by purchasing their stocks through special accounts called Roth IRAs. These subsidies do little to redistribute wealth to the people who really need it. So get rid of them.

As for raising taxes, there's one group that's been doing quite well lately: the very rich. Ninety percent of increased wealth since 1977 has gone to the richest one percent of Americans and the top marginal tax rate on these families is only about half of what it was for most of the post-war era. During the same period, the poor have gotten 12 percent poorer. In our era of Seattle robber barons and NASDAQ billionaires, there's room to give more to the people who are really in need.

Gore:

The Gore campaign didn't want to talk about raising taxes in an election year so it molded its spending program to fit within the projected surplus. This let Gore serve up a trillion dollar spending program without appearing to cost American taxpayers one additional dime, but it also backed him into a corner. Health care, childcare, and education need to be fixed, regardless of whether the repair costs can be cooked into conformity with the surplus. If the surplus doesn't materialize, he would probably have to raise taxes—a position his campaign recently started to accept.

That said, Gore has a strong record on taxes and trimming fat. He voted for the 1986 Tax Reform Act that lowered taxes for the general public while eliminating real estate and corporate tax shelters. The '86 legislation was largely Bradley's work, but Gore did his rival one better: He supported an amendment that would have increased the top marginal tax rate from 28 to 35 percent—an amendment that Bradley opposed. Gore also voted for a 1991 increase in the top marginal rate. And he gets some credit for the administration's 1993 tax reform that raised the top

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

marginal rate to its current level and was instrumental in reducing and eliminating the deficit.

Grade: B

Bradley:

Bradley's position on taxes is a bit slippery. Unlike Gore, he has never ruled out raising taxes to fund his ambitious spending program, but he won't say more than that. When we asked a Bradley spokesperson, Kristin Ludecke, whether the candidate was actually contemplating a tax raise, she said absolutely not—he's "completely confident" that his health-care plan wouldn't require it.

We then asked whether the tax increase was something he was holding in reserve in case the economy goes south. The answer was "no" again; under those circumstances, Bradley would favor actually cutting taxes as a way to stimulate the economy. So when would we be looking at a possible tax hike? "That's a couple of hypotheticals away from reality," she said.

Bradley's record is a similarly mixed bag. Bradley was the key man on passing the 1986 Tax Reform Act, but there's more to the story. The deal behind the Act was that Congress would close corporate loopholes worth tens of billions of dollars but give something back to the monied classes by lowering the top marginal tax rate to 28 percent, its lowest post-war level. The Act called for the rate to drop in stages, with the final dip to 28 percent in 1988. In 1987, however, the Senate Finance Committee realized that this last step would cause the deficit to balloon up. There was a politically expedient solution: arrest the rate at its 1987 level of 38 percent—a move that could save the Treasury billions of dollars without being portrayed as a tax hike. The majority on the Committee supported this approach but Bradley made an impassioned and successful appeal to stick to the original deal. The deficit surged up and it took the Clinton administration's tax reform bill of 1993 to bring it back down.

Grade: B

Bush:

George Bush wants to cut taxes, mostly for the rich. According to Citizens for Tax Justice, two-thirds of the tax breaks in Bush's recent tax proposal (starting with a decrease in the top marginal rate) are targeted to the richest 10 percent of Americans. The bottom 10 percent would get a reduction of about $43 a year; the wealthiest one percent would get a reduction of $50,000 a year. That's not as bad as the tax cut proposed last year by Trent Lott, Dick Armey, and the Republican Congress, but it's pretty baldly regressive and we shouldn't be surprised. Texas has one of the most regressive state tax systems in America.

In Bush's defense, the governor did slightly increase social spending in his state, but during the flushest of economic times when few sacrifices were necessary and when he could cut taxes, his clear priority during the campaign—at the same time.

Grade: D

McCain:

On the one hand, John McCain's tax rhetoric is strong. He criticized Governor Bush's proposed tax cut on the grounds that it would bleed the government dry and he has discussed a proposal of his own that would reduce lower-middle class taxes, but not top marginal tax rates. And he was critical of the proposed Republican tax cut of 1999. But underneath it all, McCain is a party man. He voted with the Republican majority for the 1999 tax cut. And his minimalist approach to taxation has won him the National Taxpayer's Union "Taxpayer's Friend Award" on four separate occasions.

McCain's slash and burn approach to pork barrel spending would no doubt save the government some money that could be spent on worthier projects. But we doubt that McCain's inner Republican would let him raise top marginal tax rates under any circumstances and Republicans have already gotten him to go along again with regressive tax cuts once; they might well be able to do it again.

Grade: C+

How will he protect the uninsured?

American health care needs a doctor. Forty-four million Americans, including 11 million children, don't have health insurance. In the richest country on earth, one in six people can't get a physical exam and can't make a doctor's appointment. Efforts to insure these people by incrementally expanding the health-care plans currently offered by the government sim-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ply can't work, as David Nather explains elsewhere in this issue. (See "Beyond Band-Aids.")

We need universal health coverage; and the best way to accomplish it would be to scrap the current jumble of Medicaid, the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and Medicare and transition to a single payer national health service like Canada's. If we did that, we'd cut costs through economies of scale, reduce administrative costs by eliminating insurance paperwork, and create a portable benefits system that would follow people when they move between jobs and around the country.

If the leap to single payer is too big, an alternative would be to let the public in on the deal that Congressman and federal bureaucrats already enjoy by making all Americans eligible for the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP)—a giant health-care program that pools hundreds of private plans and uses economies of scale to get better bargains and increased health options for members. Of course, some people wouldn't be able to afford the cost of FEHBP even if they were allowed to buy in. Subsidize them.

Gore:

Al Gore joined the administration's push for universal health care when he came into office but he doesn't want it now. He currently supports the expansion of CHIP, the provision of tax subsidies for small-business employees and other uncovered employees, and the addition of a prescription drug benefit to Medicare—proposals limited by his requirement that they, and the other initiatives he has put on the table, fit within the projected surplus. His proposals would insure 11 million children through incremental reform, but wouldn't get us close to universal coverage.

Gore's proposal isn't meritless: It's just cautious and uninspired. What *is* meritless, however, is Gore's strategy of relentlessly criticizing Bradley for proposing to replace Medicaid. Gore wants us to believe that Bradley will eliminate Medicaid and leave nothing in its place. That's not true. "I don't understand it," says Bob McIntyre at Citizens for Tax Justice. "If

Can he run the government?

A president doesn't just need good ideas, he needs to know how to make the government hum. He must know how to keep abreast of significant developments in agencies like the IRS and the EPA. He needs to know how to keep the bureaucratic chain of command from preventing him from finding out about serious problems before they turn into major scandals and from filtering out good ideas before they can become solutions.

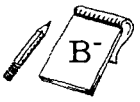
It helps if the candidate has worked in the executive branch and learned to understand the culture of the vast bureaucracy he will oversee as president. The greatest president of this century, Franklin Roosevelt, had served for eight years as assistant secretary of the Navy under Woodrow Wilson. The assistant secretary level is a crucial action point in government where policy makers interact with the career employees who carry out their policies. And at the Navy department, FDR learned to deal with both military and civilian bureaucrats. Dwight Eisenhower rose through the ranks of the army to a top command over the combined services, so while he lacked FDR's experience with the civilian side, he was perhaps our most sophisticated president in dealing with the military. He could sense when his former colleagues were telling him the truth and when they were hustling him.

According to presidential historian Fred Greenstein, a successful president must be able to both build an effective team and develop institutional structures that can get him the information that he needs. He's got to inspire people who are loyal and, crucially, he's got to figure out a way that he can get them to tell him the truth, constantly reminding himself that bad news dilutes itself as it travels up the command chain.

A large part of FDR's success came because he was a master at finding out what was really going on in government. For example, he sent his wife, Eleanor, and her dear friend, Lorena Hickok, to nose around government programs like the WPA and find out where workers were swinging their hammers and where they were sitting by the side of the road. When he wanted to know what Churchill was thinking, he didn't rely solely on the American Ambassador, Joseph Kennedy, he sent Harry Hopkins and Averell Harriman to talk to the prime minister and assess the morale of Britain during the Blitz.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

somebody takes your Honda and leaves a BMW in its place, it's not quite right to say that the Honda's been eliminated."

Grade: 

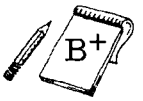
Bradley:

Calling it a BMW may be going a bit far, but Bradley's proposal is certainly big, bold, and expensive.

The core of Bradley's plan is making health care available to 95 percent of Americans by providing scaled subsidies to families with incomes of less than $50,000 a year to buy approved private coverage or join FEHBP. He would also open FEHBP to all Americans, regardless of whether they are already insured. In order to achieve universal coverage of children up to 18, Bradley would require parents to buy insurance for their kids. And like Gore, he would expand Medicare to include an optional prescription drug benefit (although Bradley's would cover more catastrophic, and fewer low-end, expenditures).

Bradley aims high but it's not clear how well the program will work. His subsidies may not actually be enough to pay for the coverage he promises and his costs may be higher than they need to be since he makes subsidies available to families that are already insured through work. And the proposal to make coverage of children mandatory may be unrealistic—particularly given that Bradley has said he wouldn't favor punishing parents who fail to get their kids insured.

Bradley's people may not have figured out the technicalities, but the idea of opening up FEHBP is a good one and we give Bradley points for taking on a big subject in a big way: A for political courage and B- for technical merit.

Grade: 

Bush:

Governor Bush has talked a good game about health care: "It's not a party issue, it's an issue that

Al Gore alone among the top four candidates has extensive experience in the federal executive branch. He has been vice president for eight years and has been far more involved in White House decision-making than most of his predecessors. By running the Reinventing Government operation, he has had an unprecedented opportunity to learn about the agencies he will oversee as president. He has succeeded in achieving a substantial reduction in the size of the bureaucracy, something Nixon, Reagan, and Bush talked about but were unable to accomplish. And he has both improved the way the government purchases goods and modernized its information technology. His most serious failure was that he didn't come to grips with the problem of getting rid of incompetent and mediocre civil servants. The reductions made by Reinventing Government were not based on merit but on attrition, buyouts, and other techniques not likely to rile the government employees' union.

Bush would like everyone to think that being governor of Texas has prepared him for the oval office, frequently making the point that: "Well, I'm the one person who has been a chief executive outside of Washington." Texas is a big state, but being governor of it is not comparable to being president. A governor can walk around the capitol building and run into department heads and their subordinates every day. He can walk down the street and meet average citizens every day. The state employees and the citizens can tell him about problems he should face. A president is insulated from these encounters so he doesn't find out unless he uses Eleanor Roosevelts, Lorena Hickoks, Averell Harrimans, and Harry Hopkinses to find out for him. Jimmy Carter also thought being governor was all the experience he needed and look what happened to him.

McCain's only executive branch experience was in the military and it did not include anything resembling Eisenhower's command experience. Neither he nor Bradley has ever worked in the civilian executive branch. And Bradley's only military service was in the reserves. So, between the two, McCain has the advantage of at least having been sufficiently involved in the military to understand its culture.

Gore: B+ **Bradley:** D **Bush:** C+ **McCain:** C

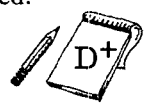
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

needs to be addressed." But he didn't do much for health care in Texas. And he seems unlikely to do much for the rest of the country.

Texas has the second highest rate of uninsured children in the country and Bush has not been enthusiastic about turning this around. When the state legislature proposed that Texas' CHIP money be available for children of families earning no more than 200 percent of the poverty line, Bush fought hard to draw the line at 150 percent. Thankfully, he failed.

Bush has not come out with a national reform proposal, but his choice of advisers suggests a preference for market-based reform, not universal coverage. Bush's top adviser on health care, Deborah Steelman, doubles as a lobbyist for HMOs like Aetna and United Health Care. Another adviser, John Goodman, is known for pushing a proposal that would provide citizens with vouchers to pay for HMOs.

One positive consideration: While most Americans can't sue their HMOs, they can in Texas, thanks to an initiative pushed by Governor Bush that he'd like to make into a national program. That's something, but it won't help the uninsured.

Grade: 

McCain:

McCain supported Senator John Chafee's reform proposal in 1991 but disappeared during the great national debates and has only recently started to talk about health care again. He has offered a campaign proposal that would give limited grants to low-income elderly people to help them pay for prescription drug and he has even talked about expanding CHIP. But even today, he has not made the issue a strong priority and he has trouble staying on topic.

Here is McCain's response to health-care questions raised a few minutes after Orrin Hatch had been discussing the Internet (a subject McCain really likes) during the first Republican presidential debate in New Hampshire:

Moderator: "Senator McCain, several major HMOs are failing financially. The system isn't working. What do you propose to fix it?"

Senator McCain: "We need a Patient's Bill of Rights, and the reason why we haven't gotten it through the Congress is because on the Democrat side the trial lawyers have them in their control and they'll want to sue anybody for anything under any circumstance. On the Republican side, we're in the grip of the huge money from the insurance companies and the HMOs—the typical gridlock which has caused Americans to have such a low opinion of what goes on in Washington."

Not bad. But then he veers off-topic.

"The Internet should not be taxed. The Internet should not be taxed. The Internet is the greatest thing that's happened to the world—somewhere between the invention of the printing press and the industrial revolution..."

After another 100 words endorsing the Internet, the bell sounded and the moderator tried again:

Moderator: "Let me return to the issue of health care and HMOs. Given how expensive health care is, HMOs are now waking up to the fact that they can't deliver the promises they made to consumers and still be profitable. If, ultimately, HMOs disappear, what then fills the void?"

McCain: "Obviously, the HMOs need to be made whole. We need to spend more money to make sure that they do. We have added more money for Medicare and Medicaid payments in the last emergency supplements that we passed. All of those things have to be done, but I believe we have to take care of patients first. And if the patients are not well treated in HMOs, then obviously then the HMOs are not going to be sought out by them. Again, on the Internet, we need to install—we are installing in every school..."

The Internet is important. But so is health care.

Grade:

How will he save social security?

Senior citizens have one huge electoral advantage over other groups: They vote. This goes a long way toward explaining why the federal government puts roughly four times more money into social security than it gives to children under eighteen. Right now, social security is swimming in cash. That's because the system is funded out of payroll taxes and the number of workers paying those taxes vastly exceeds the number of pensioners collecting benefits. In fact, social security is projected to run a $1.8 trillion surplus over the next ten years. But as the baby-boom generation retires, the surplus is going to be swallowed fast—so fast that the Congressional Budget Office projects a social security deficit of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

$19.8 trillion between 2013 and 2075.

This means that our children are going to be stuck with a 19.8 trillion bill that they will presumably have to pay by raising payroll taxes or cutting benefits. That's unfair to the next generation. And because the social security payroll tax is regressive (you're only taxed on the first $72,000 you earn regardless of whether you dig ditches or run Microsoft) it's also unfair to the working poor.

So how do you fix social security? Start with two principles: Any solution should be progressive and generationally fair. This would require means testing—which in its most dramatic form would say that if you need benefits, you get them and if you don't, you won't; less dramatically, means testing could also include taxing wages over $72,000, or recapturing benefits to high earners through higher income taxes. Then raise the retirement age so that people don't start collecting benefits until they are 70: When social security was conceived the average life expectancy was 62—now it's 76. People live longer, they should be able to work longer. Any remaining shortfalls could be made up through "nipping and tucking"—cutting benefits by lowering cost of living increases and adjusting the payout formula. It might also be a good idea to invest some portion of payroll tax revenues in the stock market—but not all of them; social security should be a government insurance program, not a national mutual fund.

Gore:

The vice president proposes to buy back government debt with accumulated social security reserves. This shows fiscal prudence (it will lower the government's short-term interest expenses and will make it easier to finance payments when social security goes into the red) but it's misleading to pose it as a solution to the overall problem. Gore's approach may save $1.8 trillion for a rainy day, but it won't help cover the future $19.8 trillion deficit—which is the amount that social security will be in the red *after* the $1.8 trillion is applied. When we asked a top Gore adviser what the candidate intended to do about the $19.8 trillion, we were told that the question isn't really fair, and that "It's absurd to solve the problems of an entirely different generation."

We disagree.

Grade: C

Bradley:

Bradley's position on social security is perfectly reasonable as far as it goes. But it doesn't go far enough.

To Bradley's credit, he accepts the premise that future deficits are a problem. He is also willing to talk about the tough choices that need to be made to address those deficits now—reducing benefits, raising taxes, raising the retirement age, and privatization.

But that's as far as it goes. Bradley does not have a specific plan for fixing social security and will not even let on which of the repair options he supports. Instead, according to a Bradley spokeswoman, Kristen Ludecke, Bradley's position is that this will have to be worked out by "reasonable people sitting around a table."

That's a little weak. The issue has been debated exhaustively on Capitol Hill for the last two years, and there has been no meaningful progress. There may not be such a thing as "reasonable people sitting around a table" when it comes to social security. That's why the system has to be fixed through political leadership—and why Bradley will have to stop explaining what the issues are and start telling us what he thinks.

Grade: C+

Bush:

Bush, like most Republicans, believes that social security could be saved if we would just start investing it in the market. But also like most Republicans, Bush hasn't thought through one huge problem:

Candidates get points for political courage, technical competence, and vision.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What happens if the market crashes? Asked by Tim Russert what he would do in this situation, Bush responded vaguely: "There will be guarantees and I'm confident a plan will have a guaranteed benefit level for all people."

Bush has also shown some courage on the issue, proposing to examine the possibility of raising the age of entitlement to 70. Bush, however, doesn't believe in means testing: "If you're paying into the system, you ought to be able to get something out of the system. And millionaires and billionaires pay into the system."

Grade: C⁻

McCain:

McCain's views are standard Republican fare—privatize social security and everything will be fine. But McCain's got one additional twist: He comes from a state with a lot of old people, and he likes to stick by them. In 1998 he proposed "The Senior Citizens' Freedom to Work Act" that would eliminate much of the limited means testing that there is in our current social security system: for every $3 that a senior citizen earns over $20,000, she loses $1 in social security benefits.

To his credit, McCain would be adamant about preventing government from stealing from the surplus to pay for current programs. But, like Gore, McCain's not addressing the looming deficit problem.

Grade: C⁻

Will he really be an education president?

There's nothing pretty about American education. American students are lagging behind the rest of the world, teachers often lack the capacity to teach them, and federal reforms aren't turning the problem around fast enough. So what do we do?

First, start at the beginning. Studies released over the past six years demonstrate that the most important educational opportunities occur before formal schooling begins. The programs we have now—whether you call them daycare or Head Start or something else—are grossly inadequate. Millions of the children who come from the most educationally and economically disadvantaged families have no enriching daycare or Head Start program. Millions more are in inadequate programs often with radically underpaid teachers. If the system wants to be fair to these children and give them an equal shot at the

Washington Monthly

Journalism Award

NOVEMBER 1999

FRANK J. MURRAY

"[illegible] Flying: Trouble for F-16s"

The Washington Times: 11/28

[illegible] spent more than $50 billion buying front-line [illegible] the past 25 years, but the equipment is still [illegible]. Half of all military crashes are pilot induced; [illegible] article argues, far more than half of F-16 crash[illegible] mechanical flaws, ranging from engine mal[illegible] collapse of turbine blades. Murray also shows [illegible] how a culture of secrecy has helped to prevent the [illegible] reformed and how, as a result, many pilots of [illegible] to die in their planes.

CAROLYN KLEINER AND MARY LORD

"The Cheating Game"

U.S. News & World Report: 11/[illegible]

Academic dishonesty is rampant in American [illegible] with piling homework and competition to get into [illegible] students believe they need to cheat to stay on top. [illegible] Kleiner and Lord's detailed article, current technology [illegible] cantly aids cheating. Now, students can [illegible] online, lift papers off the Web, and transmit [illegible] pagers and cell phones. Kleiner and Lord show [illegible] have little or no way to catch up to them.

[illegible]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

educational opportunities that the middle and upper classes take for granted, then billions of dollars of funding will need to be channeled into childcare and Head Start programs.

The next priority is getting better teachers into the classroom. The federal government should use its education budget to create incentives for states to boost entry-level salaries so that they will attract better and brighter applicants to teaching. States should also provide meaningful teacher training programs along the lines recently proposed by Wisconsin's superintendent of schools (see "Tilting at Windmills"). This means screening applicants for subject area knowledge and public speaking ability—skills that are indispensable to good teaching—and then making sure that young teachers get the mentoring, evaluation, and feedback they need to hone their skills. States should also be encouraged to replace lockstep salary systems with performance-based compensation so that motivated people get rewarded and the deadwood don't. Finally, states have to be encouraged to find creative ways to get rid of underperformers. They should be urged to dispense with the tenure systems that allow the deadwood to build up.

Finally, tighten up the reforms passed during the Clinton administration. These include laws that give states money if they adopt curriculum standards and if they authorize the creation of charter schools—independent public schools where dynamic teachers get a chance to exercise creative control. The Clinton reforms make it too easy for states to get standards funding with meaningless standards and charter schools funding without serious commitment to charter schools.

An education president will have to have enormous commitment because both political parties have anchors around their necks when it comes to reform. Democrats are beholden to the teachers' unions, who made up more than a tenth of the delegates to the 1996 Democratic Convention and tend to look unkindly on reforms that threaten the status quo. Republican support for states' rights makes them reluctant to push any national reforms.

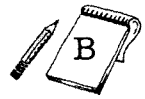
Gore*:

Gore has a big proposal on early childcare—universal pre-school for the older kids and tax credits to help out with the younger ones. While the package looks encouraging, the details have yet to emerge.

On other issues, Gore is like Clinton. That translates into a commitment to moving with conventional reforms as far as the unions permit—as with the charter schools legislation—and coming up with money for new teachers. You can see this in his proposal to attract up to 75,000 new teachers annually by offering college students and mid-career professionals $10,000 bonuses for committing to careers in teaching.

The question is whether Gore is serious about making certain that those teachers are any good. His campaign literature recognizes the need for improving teacher quality, but the specific proposals could be stronger. On the plus side, he recommends increasing "mentors and professional support" for young teachers, and giving bonuses to high-performing ones. On the minus side, he fails to come out against tenure and suggests that the education system should "help" bad teachers before removing them.

Furthermore, Gore has pandered to the unions by aggressively opposing vouchers. Vouchers raise difficult issues—particularly since they tend to take money away from schools that are doing the worst—but they shouldn't be excluded as a tool for helping poor children receive the education states are failing to provide. If Gore continues to cater to the unions on this and other issues then he is unlikely to accomplish more than watered-down educational reforms.

Grade: 

Bradley:

Like Gore, Bradley has big plans for early childcare: He would make $2 billion of block grants available each year to states and localities in a matching funds program. The money would be available for local childcare needs—building centers, improving training, hiring workers. It sounds promising, but the details have yet to emerge.

Also like Gore, Bradley has tiptoed around the teachers unions, softening the support for voucher programs he expressed in the Senate.

And in yet another parallel with Gore, Bradley wants to get more teachers into the classroom, but hasn't placed a lot of emphasis on how to make sure that they're effective. His objective is to hire 60,000 new teachers a year for the inner-city schools by offering scholarships to high school students who agree to take those positions after college. Those scholarships are particularly targeted at kids who will commit to teach math, science, and foreign languages. But the proposal would not require those scholarship students to actually major in the disci-

**As we were going to press, the Gore campaign announced a detailed proposal for education reform, which includes an impressive commitment to early childhood education. The announcement unfortunately came too late for us to take it fully into account for purposes of this section or the vice president's education grade.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

plines that they are going to teach. And it doesn't suggest that he's given any thought to improving teacher quality.

Grade:

Bush:

Texans give George Bush credit for two main things: being affable and reforming the education system. As governor, he helped push through a vouchers program, greatly increased Texas' state funding of public education, and expanded a testing and standards program that mandated that everyone from the third grade on up pass an aptitude test. He hasn't mandated that schools run their curricula a certain way; he has just demanded the test scores go up. He also backed and, by working across partisan lines, dramatically increased funding in his state for kindergarten, pre-kindergarten, and Head Start.

Bush's national goals would follow similar lines: increased federal funds for states that implement state-wide testing standards and vouchers for students whose schools fail. Good stuff, but Bush has not indicated that he wants to substantially increase federal funding overall (though he did increase state funding for education in Texas); he has only indicated that he wants to simplify funding to improve efficiency.

Grade:

McCain:

John McCain has co-sponsored a bipartisan "Troops to Teachers" initiative that subsidizes teacher certification for qualifying veterans and has come up with good rhetoric on the issue of teacher training and merit pay—"We should help bad teachers find another line of work." He is also in favor of testing at the state level and opposes any sort of national test. But he doesn't have a history of moving legislation or a detailed plan that shows that the issue is a top priority. In fact, his one major reform effort was a hopeless Senate bill proposing to cut ethanol and sugar subsidies and to use the money to pay for vouchers for low income students. A great idea, but one with so little chance of passing that it's hard to see it as anything more than a stunt.

Grade:

Will he be able to handle an international crisis?

When it comes to international affairs, more than any other area, a president has to think on his feet and be able to react instinctively and decisively. What if Ukraine breaks up in civil war the same day India launches a bomb at Pakistan? What if a missile of ours mistakenly blows up a Chinese embassy? These issues can't be parsed with simple models. What matters is the president, his personality, and his political judgment.

Nobody can predict what will happen internationally over the next four years, but we do know what kind of man is least likely to drive our tanks over an international cliff. We need someone with a commitment to multilateral action, a sense of international purpose, and good instincts for resolving conflicting interests and principles. And although it may sound old-fashioned, it can't hurt for the commander-in-chief to have served. Service gives a perspective on conflict and the realities of war that just cannot be learned off the battlefield.

Gore:

Al Gore has a consistent record as a Democratic hawk. He famously voted with only nine other Democratic senators in favor of sending U.S. troops to the Persian Gulf in 1991. At the time, there was great concern that the casualty rate would be too high and that the U.S. would stumble into another Vietnam. But the Arabian desert proved more hospitable to the U.S. war machine than the Vietnamese jungle and the doves (the *Monthly* among them) were proven wrong. Gore was proven right.

But while Gore was a hawk in the Gulf (and also with regard to U.S. intervention in the Balkans and Haiti) he also shows appreciation for strategic patience and multilateral action. He has been a stalwart defender of the administration's Russia policy—keeping lines of cash and communication open in order to stabilize an insecure nuclear power—and has pushed for increased engagement with China. He was instrumental in negotiating the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and he urges the payment in full of our U.N. dues.

The Clinton/Gore team has made mistakes—an information breakdown and, consequently, the decision to bomb a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan for example—but Gore's consistently strong judgment, plus two years of honorable service in Vietnam,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

make us believe he'd be pretty steady behind the wheel.

Grade:

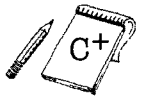
Bradley:

The focus of Bradley's major campaign speech on foreign policy was more academic than practical—the U.S. should act through the U.N., emphasize multilateral action (like economic sanctions), and not presume to police the world—and he skipped the big questions. What would he do when multilateralism fails? What are the situations where he would use force? He didn't let us know. "I think the United States can get spread thin over a wide territory in this world." OK. But then which territories do deserve our attention?

Bradley's record in the Senate demonstrates that he did a lot of hard work in this area but leaves open questions about judgment. To his great credit, he worked assiduously to master details and push forward plans for international debt relief and free trade. But he invested huge amounts of energy in less worthy causes as well. In the 1980s he developed an interest in Nicaragua—working with the Reagan White House to develop a program for democratizing the Contras while providing them aid, and often being the only senator who showed up at Senate intelligence hearings on that subject. But for all that effort, Bradley ultimately found himself on the wrong side of the issue. He was wrong on the Gulf War as well.

Here is another quote from his most recent speech: "For fifty years, after the end of World War II and until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, we were sure about one thing: we knew where we stood on foreign policy... But today when it comes to foreign policy, things are not so clear."

Exactly. We need someone with good judgment and a clear vision to make foreign policy decisions; and Bradley hasn't convinced us that he has either.

Grade: 

Bush:

You don't have to be a genius to succeed at foreign policy—look at Ronald Reagan—but you do have to care. And Bush doesn't seem like he's into it. When asked by Tim Russert about the START III agreement, he said: "That depends upon my advisers and the people who know a heck of a lot more about the subject than I do." That sounds pretty close to "whatever." One hopes that top advisers like Condoleeza Rice aren't out with the flu when Indonesian civil war breaks out.

But we don't even agree with the script that Bush's advisers give him. The governor's take on Russia is not constructive: "Our goal is to promote not only the appearance of democracy in Russia but the structures, spirits and reality of democracy. This is clearly not done by focusing our aid and attention on a corrupt and favored elite." We wouldn't want him to deliver those lines from the White House. Amnesty International can afford to alienate a huge, insecure nuclear power with this rhetoric. But coming from the president of the United States, these lines could make the world a more dangerous place. On China, Bush risks tying himself in contradictions: Treat them as a "strategic competitor" and demand human rights accountability but also increase trade; defend Taiwan at all costs but continue the one China policy. These issues can be resolved—but not by someone who doesn't care.

Grade:

McCain:

John McCain has been shot down, had his legs broken, and his life threatened. He still can't lift his arms above his head because of five years of torture in a Vietnamese POW camp. No one is going to call him a wimp if he decides to stay out of a foreign battle and people aren't ever going to question his devotion to this country.

McCain also has a strong command of the central issues of foreign policy and he has served respectably on the Senate Armed Services Committee. During the Kosovo crisis he laid out a hard, consistent, and well-thought-out policy of strong intervention, even if at times he showed excessively hawkish reflexes. But he isn't a knee-jerk hawk: He has worked to normalize relations with Vietnam and he took a lonely stand against Ronald Reagan's decision to deploy troops in Lebanon and was proved right when a terrorist attack later killed 241 marines in their Beirut barracks.

McCain is stubborn, often disagreeable, and the people we've talked to in Arizona say that reports of a volcanic temper are accurate. Still, having a temper didn't stop Washington from being a great president and it didn't lead Eisenhower into rash inter-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

national decisions. Plus, if any candidate knows the costs of war, it's McCain.

Grade:

Will he fix our environmental laws?

Environmental regulations in this country have been set up like a shower that gives frigid or scalding water, but nothing in between. Some of our laws are irrationally strong; many more are weak or sparsely enforced. This has left environmentalists in the awkward and ultimately alienating position of trying to use tangential laws to defend critical goals. The classic example of this was the crisis in Oregon where environmentalists used an owl that almost no one had ever seen, and the extremely restrictive Endangered Species Act, to prevent cutting in otherwise unprotected ancient forests. Few people thought the owl mattered, but there was no other way to protect the forests that did.

An environmental president needs to find a middle path. To do this, he first needs take the hard edges off the toughest environmental laws, by turning sticks into carrots and using market incentives to give corporations flexibility wherever possible. But this doesn't mean that he should give polluters a free ride. He also needs to strengthen the weakest laws and the enforcement of laws that we do have. The number of grand pronouncements by the EPA has increased in the past decade, but the amount of actual enforcement has gone down. This needs to change. There are serious environmental issues that need to be resolved in this country through controls—from keeping water supplies clean to protecting wilderness—and there are bad actors who will only make these problems worse if our weak laws are not strenthed and more vigorously enforced.

Gore:

Since his election Al Gore has still been able to push forward a very sensible environmental agenda that balances practicality with the clear passion he showed in his effusive book, *Earth in the Balance.* He has gotten the U.S. to sign the Kyoto protocol on global warming and has advocated sensible market-based solutions that should make the treaty palatable to businesses. Similarly, Gore has worked with Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt to develop innovative land-conservation swaps with industry. The Clinton administration is also the first in history to push forward an environmental justice agenda, which means a focus on fighting for environmental issues when they can be combined with social issues like community water pollution and hazardous waste dumping. Obscure animals like the snail darter matter; polluted communities matter more.

Gore has been criticized by relatively radical environmental groups for abandoning the ideals of *Earth in the Balance.* There's some truth to that: EPA enforcement has gone down, and the vice president hasn't made the environment his number one priority. But most of the criticism simply comes because Gore's environmental ideals have matured to include compromise and business: two necessary parts of a successful environmental strategy.

Grade:

Bradley:

During his years in Congress, Bradley voted the correct way, according to the League of Conservation Voters' scorecard, 84 percent of the time, significantly more often than Gore. Bradley also has developed a reputation among environmentalists as someone who understands the complexities of the law and stands by his principles. One strong example was when, after Republicans grabbed control of Congress in 1994, Orrin Hatch of Utah attached an anti-environmental provision to a bill Bradley had written to protect the Sterling Forest in New York and New Jersey. Bradley had to choose between compromising the environment or compromising his own bill. He chose the latter. Several months later he wrote and got a different bill to protect the forest through the Senate.

Bradley does have one advantage over Gore: He is more willing to challenge subsidies to environmentally destructive entities like the sugar industry. But he hasn't shown the same ability as the vice president to develop compromise solutions to environmental problems.

Grade:

Bush:

Air quality is improving rapidly in this country—but not in Texas. Water quality is improving rapidly too—but not in Texas. The Environmental Protection Agency is presently threatening to block highway funds

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

worth hundreds of millions of dollars to Dallas and Fort Worth because of the two cities' persistent failure to meet clean-air standards. Houston has the worst smog levels in the country.

Governor Bush has not only taken a hands-off approach to environmental issues; he has allowed corporations with vested interests to put their hands on. In one notorious example, he allowed corporations that had been exempted from emissions standards to write their own "voluntary" regulations. At the meetings where they were writing their own legislation, one incredulous aide—according to an e-mail obtained by the *Monthly*—wrote that the oil companies had met with the governor and agreed that "the industry group and the Governor's Office would develop the program, then take it to some broad-based group, including public representatives, who would then tweak it a little bit and approve it." Grandfathered companies, their lobbyists and executives gave over one million dollars to Bush's campaigns for governor and president. It's not surprising that they got to write the legislation and the public only got to tweak it.

As a presidential candidate, Bush has been moving toward the center on this issue. When questioned about the governor's record, spokeswoman Mindy Tucker responded that his environmental record has actually "been something to be proud of" and faxed back an unconvincing list of accomplishments including one that read, "In 1995, Governor Bush proposed and signed *one of the first private property rights laws in the nation.* The law requires local and state governments to consider the impact of their rules and regulations on private property before enacting those rules." This bill, the "takings bill," has been criticized by environmentalists across the country for gutting every possible state environmental regulation. It's surprising, to say the least, that Bush would include it on a list of accomplishments.

Grade: D

McCain:

John McCain often talks a good line on environmental issues. In 1996, in the throes of Republican belligerency against environmental regulations he wrote an op-ed for *The New York Times* arguing that the party shouldn't abandon the middle ground. One year ago, he gave a speech at the League of Conservation Voters claiming the mantle of conservationism, urging Republicans and Democrats to work together. He also has worked hard to protect wilderness lands in Arizona, continuing the work of one of his mentors, the legendary environmentalist Democratic Senator Morris Udall.

But words don't equal actions and, as senator, McCain has averaged a mere 20 percent rating with the League of Conservation Voters. By contrast, another Republican, Senator John Chafee, averaged a score of 70 percent over his career. McCain fought endangered species protection, tried to block wilderness expansion, and even supported Republican attempts to limit the EPA. McCain's campaign is also chaired by Chuck Hagel, the man leading the charge against ratifying the sensible and necessary Kyoto global warming treaty.

McCain does score some points because his commitment to eliminating government pork is likely to work in favor of environmental protections. He also has worked on the right side of environmental legislation in his state. And he does have an open door. As Deborah Callahan, President of the League of Conservation Voters says, "At least McCain is someone that we can have a conversation with."

Grade: B-

Is he in favor of elections not auctions?

In September and October of 1998, Brian Baird, a candidate for Congress in Washington, allowed a reporter to track him throughout every day. What did the reporter find? Baird was spending four hours a day making cold fundraising calls and just one hour a day talking to voters.

This isn't surprising. The rise of soft money and expensive television advertising has pushed the need for campaign funding to extraordinary proportions. Scholars estimate that total spending by candidates in the 1997-98 election cycle reached four billion dollars. What has all this spending done? For one, it has increased public cynicism and pushed voter turnout to a new nadir. And it also has made elections non-competitive. Two years ago, 98 percent of incumbent congressmen were able to use their fundraising machines to power themselves to reelection, outspending their opponents on average by five to one. Every incumbent won his party's nomination except Jay Kim of California, under house arrest for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

taking illegal campaign contributions. By the time we started to research this article, a former governor, a former vice president, and the popular former head of the American Red Cross had all dropped out of the Republican presidential campaign before a single vote had been cast, for one simple reason: They couldn't raise enough money.

This problem can be solved. Negative television advertising needs to be knocked out of the political system and free television time for candidates needs to be knocked in. One way to do the first would be to require candidates to appear in their television commercials. You want to criticize your opponent? You've got to do it face-to-face with your television audience. You can say anything you want, but not hidden behind millions of dollars of manufactured effects. To do the second, television stations should take the advice of last year's Gore Commission and provide five minutes of free air-time to candidates each day in the 30 days leading up to the election. If they don't want to do that, government should take away their broadcast licenses.

Next, soft money (indirect and thus hard-to-regulate donations to campaigns) should be capped at the same level as direct contributions. Right now, rich donors can give unlimited sums to parties and watch it trickle back to the candidates they support—virtually nullifying the positive effects of the donation caps that were implemented after Watergate. Lastly, make every candidate fully and completely disclose his donor lists over the Internet.

But to take the influence of money out of politics we also have to take the influence of politics out of money. If individuals and companies know that they aren't going to get paid back in kind for their donations, they aren't going to donate as much. There isn't much difference between outright bribery and a tax cut wedged into a budget bill in the dead of night that benefits one company at the expense of everyone else.

Gore:

Gore sponsored major campaign finance legislation in 1986 and stands firmly behind the McCain-Feingold campaign-finance legislation that would ban soft-money donations. He also chaired the Gore commission that recommended free television time to candidates. So why do public interest groups rate him so far behind Bradley and McCain on this issue?

For one, Gore has surrounded himself with a crowd of politically incorrect K Street power jockeys led by Campaign Chairman Tony Coelho—a former congressman who was forced to resign in 1989 after questions were raised about the propriety of a junk bond investment involving Michael Milken. Then there's Gore's media consultant, Carter Eskew, a tobacco lobbyist who helped Philip Morris defeat federal anti-tobacco legislation. And don't forget Gore's lobbyist buddies Tom Downey, Peter Knight, and Roy Neel—all of whom have played important roles in the campaign while, according to *The New York Times*, continuing "to lobby members of the Administration and, in some cases, Mr. Gore himself, on behalf of their corporate clients."

Friends are just friends and you don't need to always agree with them. But the vice president could have defeated the suspicions that inevitably follow from such associations by making campaign-finance reform one of the key issues in his election effort. He hasn't. And if a Gore administration includes people like Coelho, there isn't much reason to think they would do it differently.

Grade:

Bradley:

Advocates of campaign-finance reform love Bill Bradley for the company he keeps and for hiring reform advocate Don Berman as his campaign manager. They love him for making the issue—with child poverty and health care—one of the three issues on which he has staked his candidacy. And they love him for the substance of proposals to ban soft money, offer free television time for candidates, and publicly finance campaigns at the federal level.

Like Gore, Bradley does have friends with big money connections. He earned $2.7 million in speaking fees—much of it from special interest groups—in the two years after he retired from the Senate and he's the number-one fund-raiser on Wall Street. But, unlike Gore, Bradley has made campaign-finance reform a centerpiece of his strategy. As Steve Weissman of Public Citizen says, "if this issue isn't a priority, it's going nowhere." True. And Bradley, unlike Gore, has made it a priority.

Grade:

Bush:

Governor Bush has been the most successful fund-raiser in presidential history. He was able to knock out most of his opponents from the get-go despite having worked in government for only four years. He has

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

presently raised over $60 million for his presidential election and as H.L. Mencken famously wrote: "It is hard to get a man to believe something when his livelihood depends on him believing something else."

There is also no doubt that Bush is firmly in the hock of special interests. One of his top donors, Lonnie Bo Pilgrim, owner of a massive Texas chicken-processing plant once handed out $10,000 checks on the floor of the state legislature when a workers' compensation bill was being discussed. Later he gave $125,000 to Governor Bush's campaign and, this year, with personal donation limits of $1000, family members are suddenly appearing to donate the maximum amount to the governor's campaign. Not surprisingly, Mr. Pilgrim has, according to Texas activist groups, been able to avoid stringent regulation of his processing plants. When asked about the election, Pilgrim's spokesman said: "Mr. Pilgrim is of course a strong supporter of Governor Bush."

Bush is however responsible for one slightly good reform: He has been putting all of his fundraising data publicly on his Web site. This is a little bit like pouring cans of Coke on a burning house, but it's better than dumping gasoline—as the governor has been so prone to do.

Grade: D-

McCain:

Since his involvement in the Keating Five scandal (now referred to as the "Keating Four" scandal by public interest groups who have attached themselves to the senator), Sen. McCain has found religion and led the fight against special interests, pork and government corruption. Everybody knows this; everybody on the right side of the issue loves him for it.

He has introduced three successively weaker (but more politically palatable) versions of his signature Senate legislation co-sponsored with Russ Feingold. In his first bill, he proposed to ban soft money, offer free television time to congressional candidates, and restrict issue ads by non-governmental organizations. In the second bill, he dropped the public financing provision, and in the third he dropped the restrictions on non-governmental organizations. Even though each of those bills was torpedoed by the Republican leadership, they brought the issue to national attention.

McCain may also be the one man who could reduce one of the main recipients of government pork: the military. To stop the endless spending on unnecessary bases, we are going to need a president who has the respect of our armed forces. As McCain says: "We've been buying C-130s for 10 years. We're going to have a C-130 in every school yard in America. There's no need for much of the equipment we are purchasing."

Grade: A

Official class standings

Candidate	Fund Good Gov't	Health Care	Social Security	Education	International Affairs	Environment	Campaign Finance	Running Government	GPA
Al Gore	B	B-	C	B	A-	A-	C+	B+	3.0
Bill Bradley	B	B+	C+	B	C+	A-	A-	D	2.8
George W. Bush	D	D+	C-	B+	D-	D	D-	C+	1.5
John McCain	C+	D+	C-	C+	A-	B-	A	C	2.5

Research assistance provided by Nicole Morgan and Lucinda Vette

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Robert Kennedy, Good And Bad

The scum and glory of later Camelot

By Taylor Branch

FIRST THE GOOD NEWS. RONALD STEEL wrote this book with a worthy purpose. He set out to reconcile, temper, refute, or otherwise explain the enduring polar and powerful myths about Robert Kennedy as the celebrated "good Bobby" and infamous "bad Bobby." The twin myths have been staples of popular culture since Kennedy's lifetime. The shallow, clannish, persecutorial "bad Bobby" was a pit bull for the disgraceful Joe McCarthy and for his brother JFK, sending mafia killers after Fidel Castro, FBI wiretappers after Martin Luther King, and commandos after Vietnamese rebels as a "piano wire hawk" of the Cold War—in the signature word, ruthless. The healing "good Bobby" of later years was a reconciling figure of conscience, driven to tearful embrace of malnourished children in sharecroppers' shacks and to a martyr's crusade against the moral destruction of the Vietnam War. Steel's introduction suggests a premonition that "good Bobby" has been exaggerated to preserve him as the patron of lost hope in American politics, which is not an unreasonable start.

IN LOVE WITH NIGHT: The American Romance with Robert Kennedy
By Ronald Steel
Simon & Schuster Inc., $23.00

The book does catch Kennedy between the twin poles more than once, suspended against type in human moments that are clues to myths in error or transition. There is a brief description of RFK as a scrawny young student at Harvard, not advertising himself as the rich ambassador's son in order to make friends on the football team. The older players "came to admire his grit and lack of pretension..." writes Steel. "Bobby chose to be with them, to make his social life among townies and vets. Like most outsiders, he felt comfortable only among those who were not his social or intellectual peers. That is why he gravitated so naturally toward children..." Steel catches Kennedy twenty years later in the high councils of Armageddon as his brother's Attorney General during the Cuban Missile Crisis, already deeply invested in clandestine plots to take vengeance on Castro and now pushing for a decisive air attack to wipe out the Soviet missiles. "Although RFK at first sided with the hardliners, he calmed down," writes Steel, and with those three words his account veers into RFK's diplomacy that helped the country draw back from nuclear showdown. Steel again zooms in on Kennedy two years later, wrestling with whether to become a Senate candidate after JFK's assassination. "He was not, to say the least a natural politician," Steel observes. "Indeed, it would be hard to imagine anyone less skilled at ingratiating himself with voters and special-interest groups, or less naturally inclined to do so... He knew how to threaten but not how to cajole; he got angry easily and held grudges forever... A virtual teetotaler, he did not drink with the boys, and had no patience for small talk and bonhomie. He could not stand to be touched."

Steel twice glimpses Kennedy as a senator in conflict with himself about his partner and rival in liberal Democratic politics, LBJ. He describes Kennedy pounding on a hotel door in a fury to revise William Manchester's forthcoming book about President Kennedy's assassination—"not because of [Manchester's] worshipful approach to JFK, about which there could be no disagreement," writes Steel, "but because of the author's contemptuous treatment of Lyndon Johnson." Kennedy was defending the "widow's honor" of his sister-in-law Jacqueline, who, kindly treated by LBJ, thought Kennedy loyalists had unfairly vented their grief through Manchester in crude attacks on Johnson. But RFK was also defending his "own political ambitions," which mandated public respect for the new president. Steel describes how Kennedy successfully browbeat Manchester into a slightly more favorable portrait of Johnson, and closes the incident with the judgment of a Kennedy aide that the ensuing Manchester controversy "did more than anything else to affix the image of ruthlessness on Bob Kennedy." Finally, in a 1968 scene just after LBJ's political surrender and just before RFK's

TAYLOR BRANCH, *author of the Pulitzer prize-winning* Parting The Waters, *is a contributing editor for* The Washington Monthly.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

death, Steel sketches Kennedy's White House visit to pay his respects to Johnson as a candidate to succeed him. Johnson morosely said he had come undone trying to keep faith with John Kennedy's course in Vietnam, and that he trusted the late president's spirit would look down on him favorably, whereupon Kennedy replied, "You are a brave and dedicated man, Mr. President." He whispered the words so softly that Johnson asked him to repeat them.

Now the bad news. These are among Steel's most suggestive character moments, and he does nothing with them to refine the Kennedy myths. What does he mean that Kennedy "calmed down" during the Cuban Missile Crisis? Was this turning point in the Cold War also a turning point in his personal obsession with enemies? Steel shows no interest. He neither recognizes nor explores the layered irony of the Manchester incident, so that we are presented with RFK who was both selfishly and honorably ruthless about being less mean to Johnson. As for the farewell meeting, Steel takes from it the standard fare about how much they disliked each other and ignores the begging invitation to reappraise the polar images of Johnson and Kennedy on Vietnam. Recent scholarship shows that LBJ expressed far more doubt than critics ever guessed about the soundness and even the morality of his policy, while Kennedy, who called the war immoral, never said it should be ended outright.

This is not to say that Steel or anyone else is obliged to wrestle all ambiguity to the ground for either man. The truest and most riveting characters are full of internal conflict, and a writer might conclude in good faith, hypothetically, that Kennedy felt on the same day both the piano wire hawk and the immoral-war dove in full mythological strength. But then the task for Steel's professed mission would be to inquire where the warring traits came from, how they coexisted, what made them ebb and flow, and why.

Steel utterly fails to go behind the romance to discover a more convincing Robert Kennedy, mostly because he uses storybook language far more freely than the mythmakers he criticizes. The book aims for tempered realism but reads like Edith Hamilton at Princess Diana's funeral. The chapter that opens with RFK as an unnatural candidate is titled "Lord-in-Waiting," and the royal images alone spill in every direction. Camelot, with JFK "and his faithful Knights of the Oval office," is introduced tongue-in-cheek, but Steel lapses in his own voice to images of Kennedy as "his brother's hereditary successor," "living reincarnation of a beloved king," "feudal chief before his assembled subjects," and so on. At the 1964 Democratic Convention, Kennedy read a tribute to JFK's memory that "hauntingly evoked the dead monarch." He received adulation "like a Roman emperor" and contested LBJ as a usurper of his place. "What they were engaged in was, of course, a war of succession," writes Steel. "Under the Constitution, Johnson was the legal heir to the throne. But Bobby was, in his own mind and the ardent conviction of the Kennedy court, the hereditary heir."

Since truer proportion is his stated aim, Steel would do well to leave thrones and heirs out of the Constitution. Instead, he soars off with Kennedy to heaven, criticizing the "believed" notion of him as a "caring, sensitive pastor to life's victims," but presenting him as "a curious figure for the role of messiah," who "could not be satisfied by anything less than immortalization." To frenzied, worshipful audiences—"the dispossessed, the ignored, the despairing, and above all the blacks"—Kennedy was a figure of "divine grace" who promised "salvation and redemption" for every kind of voter. "In Robert Kennedy's house are many mansions," says Steel. Secular myths sprinkled along the way include the standard Greeks, and Kennedy as Ahab chasing his white whales of Castro and Jimmy Hoffa.

With so many fanciful, larger-than-life images floating around in his prose, Steel almost inevitably gets carried away into new and less credible myths of his own. In four different passages, he traces the emotional power of the JFK funeral to careful research by the Kennedy family on the symbols and trappings used for Lincoln. This is the first step in a great "calculation" by Robert Kennedy that Steel introduces as follows: "Bobby had to transmute his brother, brush away his failures and omissions, and create a legend based on expectation. Bobby could then become the inheritor of the future." By repetition and bald assertion, Steel manages to credit this library research for a good portion of the Kennedy appeal to black voters, saying that "because of his Lincoln-like funeral ceremonies, many black people came to believe that in some way he had, like the Great Emancipator, died for them and because of them." Once loosed from natural causes and historic restraint, the great calculation myth brings in the Johnson rivalry to account for what Steel calls Robert Kennedy's "improvised" affinity with young people, blacks, Hispanics, Vietnam War opponents, non-union workers, and the poor: "he was trying to put together a coalition of outsiders because LBJ had co-opted the center." Steel's puppeteer view of both candidate Kennedy and the electorate runs through to the end, when RFK "deliberately fomented hysteria as an electoral device," because Humphrey and Johnson blocked his access to Democratic machinery. "It was all calculated," writes Steel.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The book surrenders all but the pretense of transcending or improving romance to discover a new Robert Kennedy, beyond the familiar twin legends. In practice, Steel merely debunks the promise of the later "good Bobby" with the corrosive revelations about his earlier secrets-the Mafia connections, wiretaps, Hoover blackmail, and assassination plots. He winds up doubting the very existence of change in him, asserting that even his eloquence in South Africa and his plunging identification with the poor and downtrodden "could have been simple political calculation: he needed the votes of black Americans if he was to stand a chance of being elected senator or president." His book is stippled with acid. Steel is neither the first nor last writer to feel betrayed by the Kennedys over the lost innocence of the 1960s, but he has matched its fabled credibility gap with his claim to have learned something.

Steel resists the notion of growth in any politician. The idea that transforming experience "can be found in the daily compromises of politics, let alone in politicians, is a disturbing one," he writes. "Politics in a democratic society is about interest groups and deals, not about salvation." If Kennedy had lived to be president, "he would have had to become what every president ultimately is: a power broker."

Then why write a sad, bitter book about him? I think Steel is imprisoned in his own myth of the great calculation. He seems stuck on dilemmas from Vietnam's scalded turning point of the Cold War, where he ended his excellent work on Walter Lippmann, and somehow blames Robert Kennedy for the misplaced hopes ever since. The fact is that Kennedy lived at the volcanic core of historic events in transformation, between Cold War enemies and post-Cold War nonviolence. Steel calls Robert Kennedy the most avid believer in the Kennedy myth of innocent hope, but he also acknowledges that Kennedy avoided discussion of his brother's assassination in part because he felt the undertow of hidden government earlier and more keenly than the rest of us. Yet Kennedy kept going through changes much bigger than the detached feuds and morality plays Steel describes. His evolution in race relations alone was a tumbling ordeal of naive promises and haunted conscience and renewed experiment into hard-earned grace over years. He was never master of the forces that battered his psyche, but he never gave up, either. Because he never lost hope, he never stopped offering hope. This is the unmyth of Robert Kennedy that Steel must deny until he recovers from his own disillusionment. ●

Getting the Scoop

Memories from journalism's golden age

By Mark Feldstein

YEARS BEFORE WOODWARD AND BERNSTEIN, there was Pearson and Anderson. When the legendary Watergate reporting team was still practically in diapers, columnists Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson were striking terror throughout official Washington, virtually inventing modern investigative reporting in the nation's capital, beginning when Harry Truman was in the White House.

PEACE, WAR, AND POLITICS: An Eyewitness Account
By Jack Anderson and Daryl Gibson
Forge, $27.95

Pearson is now long dead, Anderson ailing from Parkinson's disease. But the surviving granddaddy of muckraking takes one last ride around the Washington merry-go-round in an engaging, often hilarious look back on a lifetime devoted to poking the eye of the powerful and the pompous. Anderson's memoir is also a light and entertaining survey of scandal in post-World War II Washington, and a history of two Beltway reporters who weren't afraid to get their hands sullied as long as they felt it was on behalf of the public. Indeed, they spirited off classified documents, eavesdropped on private conversations, and crusaded openly and joyously without regard for more conventional notions of journalistic objectivity. In recent years, Anderson has faded into obscurity. His sources have dried up, retired, or died, while a younger generation of reporters has largely pushed him aside. To Washington's power elite, Anderson was always an object of derision, an uncouth gossip-monger and self-promoter whose hyped-up prose and shoot-from-the-hip style were considered ungentlemanly in the snobbish drawing rooms of the nation's capital.

Yet whatever his faults, Jack Anderson was a critically important check on governmental power during a time

MARK FELDSTEIN, *a producer at "Dateline NBC" in Washington, was an intern for Jack Anderson in the 1970s.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when few other reporters even tried to hold officials accountable. Indeed, Anderson's old-fashioned muckraking exploits provide a telling contrast to the current corporate climate in today's ever-consolidating media world. Anderson was one of the last of a dying breed of independent journalists who answered only to his own personal sense of right and wrong, not to any publisher maneuvering for marketing position.

Anderson's righteous sense of morality was honed early, in the tight-knit Mormon community where he grew up outside Salt Lake City during the Depression. Anderson was molded by the Mormon philosophy that life is a struggle between good and evil, but he was also rebellious, chafing at his dour father and longing instead for adventure beyond his strict world.

He soon found his escape as a reporter, first infiltrating polygamous sects at home, then traveling to China, where he became a war correspondent. Anderson cultivated Chou En-lai as a source, then (briefly) spied on China's Communist Party for U.S. intelligence. He soon ended up battling American military censors, and headed back home to seek further adventure as a "leg man" for Washington's only investigative reporter at the time, Drew Pearson.

It was 1946, and Pearson was at the height of his power. The young Anderson got a crash course in crusading journalism: "Drew was forever meddling in affairs of state, needling congressmen to do his bidding, even writing speeches for them to deliver on the floor. He believed that to get the job done he must intrude during all phases of the battle. Not only would he expose the abuse, he would hound the tribunal until it investigated, instruct witnesses on their testimony, propagandize the galleries, help draft the remedial legislation, and write a popular history of the affair."

Anderson followed the clarion call of his mentor. He got himself invited along while investigators bugged the hotel room of a businessman suspected of bribing Dwight Eisenhower's White House chief of staff. He testified before congressional committees, lobbied senators on their votes and used his column as leverage.

It was all for a good cause. Pearson was one of the few editorial voices in the nation who supported the progressive policies of the New Deal—most newspapers at the time were owned by conservative Republicans. Pearson and Anderson took upon themselves the mantle of battling for the common man. "Weasel wording and outright lies are the norm in Washington," Anderson writes. "I confess there are moments of pure joy when some public servant forgets who the true bosses are and I am around to remind him."

Anderson grew close to Joseph McCarthy, and at one time the two even double-dated. McCarthy was such a trusted source that he would even let Anderson listen in on the senator's private phone calls with Senate Majority Leader Robert Taft. Anderson in turn shared his own files to help McCarthy try to back up his reckless and unsubstantiated charge of communist infiltration of the State Department. Nevertheless, when Pearson decided to go after McCarthy, Anderson followed suit—at first reluctantly, then enthusiastically digging up dirt on his one-time friend, an act of courage few in the media would emulate until years later.

McCarthy did not appreciate this betrayal. "You wait for the next elevator, Jack," he told Anderson one day. "I don't want you stinking up this one." But Anderson took the rejection in stride. "Contrary to popular theology," he writes, "there is nothing that produces as much exhilaration and zest for living as an ugly, protracted, bitter-end vendetta that rages for years and comes close to ruining both sides." In the end, it was Pearson and Anderson left standing—although McCarthy's efforts to brand them as Communist lackeys led to the loss of their radio sponsor, and to a public fistfight between McCarthy and Pearson (with Vice President Nixon breaking it up). "I miss the old slam-bang attacks," Anderson reflects. "In those days, a critic might step up to Drew Pearson or myself and deliver a punch in the nose. Today, they spin and they sue."

It was indeed a simpler time in mid-century America, and a simpler world-view prevailed. There were good guys and bad guys, and Pearson and Anderson saw their job as helping the one and exposing the other. Their column was the most influential in the nation, carried by hundreds of newspapers. While a disapproving *Washington Post* relegated them to the comics pages, their scoops could not be ignored—from the cash payments billionaire Howard Hughes secretly funneled to both the Nixon and Humphrey campaigns to the CIA's clandestine hiring of Mafiosi to try to kill Fidel Castro (and the execution of Anderson's Mafia source as a result).

In the mid-1960s, Anderson's exposé of the corrupt Senator Thomas Dodd should have earned him a Pulitzer. So should his unearthing of a smoking-gun memo by an ITT vice-president admitting that the company paid off the Nixon campaign to kill anti-trust prosecution. But jealous competitors refused to recognize his work and even blackballed Anderson from the prestigious insider's Gridiron Club.

Anderson's adversaries in government were even more aggressive. FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover resorted to animal metaphors to describe the columnist—"a rat of the worst type," "a flea-ridden dog" and "lower

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than the regurgitated filth of vultures... he'll go lower than dog shit for a story." The last, at least, was true; Anderson's staff rifled through Hoover's trash (including his dog's feces), largely because Anderson thought Hoover had gotten too powerful and needed to be put in his place. (Congress and the White House were afraid to take on Hoover because of his dossiers crammed with dirt on these politicians.)

But it was the Nixon White House that really went after Anderson, after the paranoid president went on repeated tirades about all the damaging leaks the columnist was receiving. Nixon already blamed Anderson for narrowly losing the 1960 election to John Kennedy because of the columnist's election-eve story about a secret Howard Hughes "loan" to Nixon's brother. As president, Nixon watched, horrified, as Anderson obtained all kinds of embarrassing—and classified—secrets about Vietnam. Then Anderson published verbatim transcripts of the secret Watergate grand jury, thwarting Nixon's efforts to stonewall the scandal by hiding behind grand jury secrecy. To top it off, Anderson outed Vice President Spiro Agnew's son as being gay.

The Nixon White House decided to strike back. White House aide Jeb Magruder told colleague G. Gordon Liddy that Nixon "would sure like to get rid of that guy." Along with fellow White House "plumber" E. Howard Hunt, Liddy met with a CIA operative to discuss options—drugging Anderson with LSD, poisoning his aspirin bottle, staging a fatal mugging. Nixon's men then turned to more subtle measures, unsuccessfully trying to discredit Anderson by planting false evidence that he was gay or trying to get him drunk before his radio show. But none of these tactics worked; the straight-arrow Anderson was a father of nine and a teetotaler, not easy to discredit.

But the Nixon Administration still didn't give up. In "Operation Mudhen"—an apparent synonym for "muckraker"—a team of CIA agents began following Anderson when he met with sources. Undaunted, Anderson set his teenage children on the operatives, who fled before a laughing Anderson brood gleefully taking photos of the government spies.

Still, Nixon's henchmen were undeterred. They arrested Anderson's partner, Les Whitten, for receiving stolen government documents while he covered an unrelated story, and then used that arrest as a pretext for subpoening Anderson and Whitten's telephone records—allowing them to trace the reporters' sources.

Anderson decided it was time to draw a line in the sand. Publicly, he issued "Free Les Whitten" buttons to milk the story for maximum publicity. Privately, he retaliated against the acting FBI Director, L. Patrick Gray, who was responsible. In a meeting with the Senate Majority Whip Robert Byrd, Anderson "did something I am not proud of. In fact, had my own staffers done it, I would have fired them. 'Bobby, I've got more newspapers in West Virginia than Pat Gray has,' I said. My message was clear: If I ever found any dirt on him, I had an audience in his home state that would love to read about it. There was a pause and then he said, 'All right. What do you want me to do?'" Gray was defeated. For Anderson, this wasn't a matter of revenge, but of self-preservation: "Drew Pearson had taught me that if anyone ever trampled on the Constitutional rights of the column, I should hit back swiftly and with such force that the next person would be forewarned not to tangle with me. 'If you don't,' Drew said, 'they'll descend on you like a flock of buzzards and pick you apart.'"

To his credit, Anderson fesses up to at least some of his mistakes. He apologizes to Spiro Agnew's son for delving into his private life, and for his erroneous claim (and tardy retraction) that Sen. Thomas Eagleton had been caught drunk driving. And he admits he made a mistake getting too close to President Reagan and spiking his own scoop about the president's disastrous arms-for-hostages swap.

In truth, while Anderson continued to rack up scoops in his later years, after Watergate he lost his monopoly on Washington muckraking. Suddenly, investigative reporting became fashionable, and Anderson had stiff new competition—from Seymour Hersh, from Bob Woodward, and from a legion of other aspiring reporters. The Pearson-Anderson monopoly was broken.

Anderson's memoirs cover ground familiar to those of us old enough to remember the drama of his era. Despite its flaws—sloppy editing and proofreading, a self-involved blustery style, and superficial historical summaries—it ought to be required reading in every journalism school. After all, for more than a generation, Pearson and Anderson were the only real journalistic check in the nation's capital. Without them, many of Washington's secrets would never have come to light.

Jack Anderson was one of a kind—courageous, even heroic, when most of the press was either ducking for cover or sucking up for invitations to elite Georgetown dinner parties. Part carnival huckster, part freedom fighter, part impish rascal, he stood alone for many years when it was decidedly unfashionable to do so. And after being vilified by the leading lights of the establishment, in the end he was almost always right. For that, the nation—and his envious journalistic colleagues—owe him a debt of gratitude. ●

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Political Booknotes

The Great War

By Andrew Cockburn

ON THE EVIDENCE OF THE LATE George Vesel, of Carmel, California, one of the most influential people of the twentieth century was a teenage girl who lived in Sarajevo in 1914. Vesel, whom I interviewed in 1986, had been a close friend during his youth of Gavrilo Princip, who murdered the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand and his wife on June 28, 1914, thus precipitating a chain of events leading, sequentially, to the First World War, the Russian Revolution, the rise of Hitler, the Second World War, the Cold War, Vietnam, and so on. According to Vesel, Princip was motivated to perform the fateful deed (to which Vesel was an eyewitness) because his girlfriend had just dumped him.

THE PITY OF WAR
by Niall Ferguson
Basic Books, $30.00

Niall Ferguson, an English academic prodigy, has confined his research to documentary sources and has therefore missed this crucial data. Nevertheless, in a style of historiography more common in England than on this side of the Atlantic, he sets out to offer what he suggests are radically revisionist assessments of various aspects of the conflict. He energetically rebuts the notion that World War I was rendered inevitable by secret diplomacy and militarism, as the survivors of the ensuing slaughter commonly believed. Nor does he accept that the German leaders embarked on war in 1914 out of a sense of hubris, but rather because they felt weak and thought they could only get weaker as time went on. Other topics subjected to his exhaustive scrutiny include the effect of propaganda in keeping the war going, British and German economic management, German military prowess, morale on both sides, and the reason for Germany's sudden collapse.

Curiously, despite his stated conclusions, Ferguson makes a convincing case that secret diplomacy and militarism did actually play a vital role in escalating the clash into a world war. (If Britain had not joined in, ultimately dragging the United States with her, the conflict would have remained just another one of those European wars.) Neither the British public nor the majority of the ruling Liberal government felt any particular antipathy toward Germany. However, key officials in the British War Office, together with a clique at the Foreign Office, had been secretly negotiating with the French for years to send the British army to France if war broke out with Germany. Thus the British were committed. Why did they do this? Ferguson skates over the issue, but he does provide an instructive hint: He suggests that Sir Henry Wilson, the senior general who had forged the crucial agreement with the French, was principally interested in strengthening the War Office "for a future departmental war with the Admiralty," while the naval strategists were touting their own demented scheme for an amphibious invasion of Germany's Baltic coast.

Of course, when generals and admirals put parochial interests such as interservice rivalry ahead of their official task of guarding the nation and defeating an enemy, they usually find themselves woefully unprepared for an actual conflict. Sir Henry Wilson may have triumphed in scotching the schemes of the hated admiralty but, as Ferguson concedes, the British army in 1914 was completely unsuited for war in Europe, composed of "semi-literate, unskilled working class youths" and officered by "men whose principal accomplishment was a 'good seat' on a hunter." The Germans, supposedly more professional in their approach, had their own extraordinary lapses. Their senior officer corps was deliberately dominated by landed aristocrats, while the General Staff failed to notice that the nitrates crucial to the manufacture of ammunition all came from British owned mines in Chile, along sea routes dominated by the Royal Navy. When they belatedly noticed this awkward fact and sent a fleet to open the sea lanes, the British were at a loss to understand the reason for the expedition. Only the fortuitous genius of German chemists in inventing a process for producing artificial nitrates saved Germany from rapid defeat.

Ferguson supplies mountains of data to emphasize that most people in Europe did not want a war, and that indeed the secret plotting of the anti-German clique in the British War Office and Cabinet almost failed to swing the government and country behind intervention. The fact that the British did nonetheless intervene and slaughter a generation of their own youth in the process gives rise to the thought that the word "conspiracy"—abhorred by any professional historian with tenure on his mind—might just apply. Ferguson derides the possibility that arms manufacturers might have had something to do with bringing on the war, pointing out their relative insignificance in the national economies of the time. He may be right, though it might be worth bearing in mind that people who actually lived through those events had a strong impression to the contrary. In his wonderful memoir of growing up in pre-war Vienna, the great writer Stefan Zweig remarks on how the assassination of the deeply unpopular Archduke initially did not arouse much outrage in Austria. "It was only when newspapers in the pay of the arms manufacturers began to whip up sentiment against Serbia that the mood began to change and become bellicose."

The author has already made a name for himself by highlighting the historic role of the bond markets, and therefore operates on familiar ground in discussing the financial arrangements made by the warring powers. In discussing military events, however, he is on less sure ground. He does discuss the fact that in actual combat

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Germans were rather more successful and proficient than the Allies, but that in the final months they began surrendering in large numbers. However, he seems at a loss to understand the reasons for either of these phenomena. Here Ferguson would have done well to have studied the late Col. John Boyd, for example, preeminent among military thinkers of this or almost any other age, who spent much time analyzing the process through which the minds of combatants, when disoriented by conflicting and rapidly changing data inputs, "fold back on themselves" and effectively cease to function. Collectively, this is manifested in an army by the loss of the will to fight, hence mass surrenders. The Germans, especially in the tactics they developed for their great offensive in the spring of 1918—which almost won the war—proved adept in fostering this sort of collapse. Their defeat on the western front in the summer and fall of that year was surely a result of the same process.

Ferguson's lack of insight on this subject however is not uncommon in contemporary British, as opposed to American, military studies. Thanks perhaps to the searing experience of Vietnam, the United States currently produces discussion on this topic an order of magnitude more sophisticated than anything coming across the Atlantic. (Some British historians currently argue that their World War I generals were actually rather good at their job. One fatuously compared them to a football manager "who takes a few seasons to get it right"!)

Given the vast amount of documentation available on the war (to which historians can now add my friend Vesel's reminiscences) the subject will undoubtedly be tossed around for many years to come, including confident pronouncements by "debunkers" like Ferguson. Readers should however entertain the possibility that the survivors of that conflict who thought that their friends had died of a combination of venal defense contractors, stupid politicians, and self seeking militarists might just have got it right.

ANDREW COCKBURN*'s most recent book is* Out of the Ashes; The Resurrection of Saddam Hussein.

Wannabe

By Christine Gray

IAN FRAZIER'S HIGHLY READABLE, thought-provoking, and often very funny *On the Rez* begins with a simple, short, declarative sentence. "This book is about Indians." In fact, the book is about something entirely different: Ian Frazier's own selective experience of Indians—in particular, of a number of Indians he comes to know off, and on, the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota.

What motivates the book is Frazier's own search for something he believes can be found in Indian society but which white society seems to him unable to produce: the capacity to be personally free.

ON THE REZ
by Ian Frazier
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $25.00

Frazier ruefully admits he is an "Indian wannabe." He does not want to join traditional Indian religious ceremonies, dance in a sun dance, pray in a sweat lodge, or go on a vision quest with the help of a medicine man. He wants something "just as Indian, just as traditional, but harder to pin down." He wants the apparent self-possessed sense of freedom in Indians that has always captivated white people; he wants to develop the character of the "uncaught" Indian. And the only way to do it is to go to the source.

The leading character is an Oglala-Sioux, Le War Lance, whom we first meet in New York, far from his home on the Pine Ridge reservation. Lance wears bizarre haircuts and even stranger clothes. His mind is constantly creating a personal reality that freely traverses the worlds of fact and imagination. Maintaining his own private frontier with the dominant society, Lance picks up pieces of mainstream culture as he feels, weaving truth and fiction to create one wild and improbable scenario after another.

Frazier can never be sure which of Lance's stories are truth and which are fiction. "For years," he confides, " I thought his story about jumping off the Space Needle in Seattle attached by just a Band-Aid to the end of a bungee cord within a promotional stunt for the Johnson & Johnson company might have a grain of truth to it somewhere." It turned out that Frazier was wrong on this one. But other stories only slightly less wild turned out to be true.

The mix of truth and fiction throws Frazier off balance. It throws the reader off balance, too. Lance, we quickly learn, either confounds or transcends the usual assessments made by those of us who live regular lives in white society about who is free and who is not. (The job, the salary, the mortgage or the rent, the car and all those material goodies, enabling, constraining, freeing us up—but for what?) Always out of cash, often under the influence of alcohol, Lance seems as much at the mercy of events as he does their shaper. Irritatingly irresponsible. Dependent. Yet, still his own person. Carving his own spaces where he can. Is this freedom?

Lance soon returns to the Rez to escape jail. Fate brings Frazier out west too where he continues his quest. But as eloquent and disarmingly honest as he is, Frazier is caught in a trap. He wants to be "uncaught"—but to find uncaught-ness, it seems, Frazier is compelled to capture it and pin it down.

He convincingly conveys the message that by paying attention to Indians, by becoming more aware of their presence, their values, and what the history of contact with white society has done to them, we can learn about and value what Indians are and have. In doing so, we can learn to be better than we are. We, like Frazier, can seek a new understanding of freedom.

Yet Frazier's friendship with Lance, one senses, is compromised by Frazier's agenda and, in the end, the portrait of Indianness that Frazier offers is just the creation of another set of stereotypes drawn by a white man. Seeking to enlarge his own truncated vision, and ours, too, one feels that Frazier has stuffed a whole people into the shape and size of his own dream of freedom. He meant well. But in mean-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing well, he stifled the voices he seeks for us to hear.

In this day and age, we have grown used to the idea that ethnic minorities can speak for themselves. The ground between red and white is certainly one that is open for exploration. But Frazier went beyond this to tell us, as he said, about the Indians themselves. One wonders just how much he really does know.

This disturbing aspect of the book—which is in so many ways a thoughtful and thought-provoking look at the ground between Indians and whites—is caught in the title. Whether or not Frazier chose it, it misleads. It is unclear just how long Frazier spent on the reservation, or whether he just visited frequently at a time when he lived nearby. Less punchy, less appealing, but much more accurate, it should be called *On the Rez Through a Skilled White Reporter's "Wannabe" Eyes.*

CHRISTINE GRAY's *forthcoming book is titled* The Tribal Moment in American Politics.

Staying at Home

By Curtis Gans

NONFICTION BOOKS ABOUT politics tend to fall into three categories. There are a few important books that break new ground and provide unique insight. There are many that recycle conventional wisdom or deal with minutia not worth the reader's time. And then there are the books in middle: the useful books that provide new information but don't open any new horizons.

Nonvoters, by Jack Doppelt and Ellen Shearer falls into the last category—the useful book. It is essentially an elaboration of a 1996 survey of 3,323 age-eligible Americans, 1,001 of them nonvoters. The survey is supplemented by in-depth interviews with 30 of those nonvoters from five different categories. The process is an attempt to define America's no-shows who now make up over half the eligible electorate in presidential elections, nearly two-thirds in congressional balloting.

This book makes three essential points about nonvoters, one centrally and two in passing. Of the latter pair, the first is a simple statement that what unites nonvoters is "their disaffection for and disconnection from the political process." Thus, non-voting, according to the authors, is not, as some have claimed, a product of economic satisfaction.

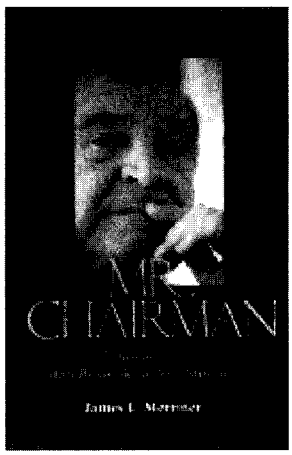
NONVOTERS:
America's No-Shows
by Jack C. Doppelt and Ellen Shearer
Sage Publications Inc., $24.95

The second is that there is no procedural quick fix for the system in registration and election law. Solutions like election day registration, mail or Internet voting, or an election day holiday, are not going to make much difference. The authors posit this, in part, because the procedural fixes that have been enacted—such as driver's license registration—have not reversed the decline in turnout. While some respondents cited difficulties with registration and voting as reasons for their lack of participation, further probing produced reasons having more to do with attitudes towards the political system.

But the bulk of the book is devoted to showing that there is no stereotypical nonvoter. While most nonvoters are—as research and common sense suggest—poorer, younger, and less educated than voters, there are those who are highly educated, wealthy, and older. While the majority of nonvoters may not read newspapers regularly, watch television news, or participate in their community, there are also those who do keep up on the news and participate in their communities.

Doppelt and Shearer divide nonvoters into five groups ranging from the "doers" (better educated, more likely to read newspapers, volunteer in civic activities, and think well of government and today's political institutions), to the "unplugged" (poorer, less educated or involved, but are involved in civic activity), to the "irritables" (older, more educated, but hos-

MR. CHAIRMAN



Power in Dan Rostenkowski's America
James L. Merriner
This political biography provides one of the keys to how power is sought, won, exercised, and distributed in contemporary America. "Too often individuals like Dan Rostenkowski are victims of journalistic overgeneralization—this book provides a more balanced view of one of Illinois's most important twentieth-century congressmen."—Paul M. Green, coeditor (with Melvin G. Holli) of *The Mayors: The Chicago Political Tradition*
12 b&w illustrations, $29.95

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY PRESS
1-800-346-2680
www.siu.edu/~siupress

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tile to the political process) to the "don't knows" (completely outside the political system) to the the group the authors feel is the least likely to ever become involved: the "alienateds" (they understand politics but are hostile to it).

This useful book suffers from two problems. The interviews that supplement the poll do not necessarily illustrate the categories in which those interviewed are placed. Some of the "unpluggeds" seem at least as active in their communities as the "doers" and by the time you read all 30 interviews, you emerge both depressed about the state of politics and a little less certain that the authors' categories work.

Perhaps more importantly, *Nonvoters* reminds this reader of the gifts from Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas In Wales*—"books that told me everything about the wasp, except why." This book does not tell us why nonvoters are different from voters, what has propelled them in ever-increasing numbers to the political sidelines, the societal import of the problem or what, if anything, could be done about it.

But if you are satisfied with the who and the what—a book about who the nonvoters are and what they, in their various permutations, are thinking—then *Nonvoters* is a very helpful guide.

CURTIS GANS *is director of the non-partisan, non-profit Committee for the Study of the American Electorate.*

The Anti-Cynic

By Richard D. Kahlenberg

IN 1992, AT THE TAIL END OF the Reagan-Bush era, I published a memoir about my time at Harvard Law School, lamenting that so many idealistic liberals (myself included) were tempted by the fruit of corporate law. But the book also held out hope that if a Democratic president were elected, perhaps there would be a rush away from the greed and cynicism of the 1980s and public service and political activism would be restored to the lofty heights of earlier eras.

In 1999, Jedediah Purdy, now a Yale Law student, has published an idealistic book which rightly argues that at the end of the Clinton presidency, we are in fact worse off than ever: less committed, more cynical, more sarcastic. Says Purdy, "To talk about politics today is to presume insincerity. It is the requirement of even modest political sophistication to understand that public figures neither say what they mean nor mean what they say."

FOR COMMON THINGS:
Irony, Trust, and Commitment in America Today
by Jedediah Purdy
Knopf, $20.00

Purdy's book, *For Common Things: Irony, Trust, and Commitment in America Today*, is written as "a response to an ironic time." The book, which contrasts Purdy's childhood in rural West Virginia with the jaded environs of Exeter and Harvard College, is a protest against a culture which reveres irony, which he defines as the "refusal to believe in the depth of relationships, the sincerity of motivation, or the truth of speech—especially earnest speech." Purdy makes his case passionately and sometimes eloquently, but the strongest evidence about the tenor of our times comes not so much from the book itself as from the public reaction to it. The book and its author have received a flood of attention from the elite media and it turns out that lots of people, including lots of liberals, hate the book and intensely dislike the author. What is it that gets people so worked up? Several explanations emerge.

The first, and the most legitimate, criticism is that in taking on all that is ironic, Purdy overreached. Irony, as opposed to cynicism, can be a source of enjoyment and humor and a devastating tool for exposing hypocrisy. A liberal against irony unilaterally disarms and gives up on the right to savor a cartoon of George W. Bush delivering a sermon about "merit" while standing on a platform built of his many unearned advantages. A proper sense of irony can keep idealism exhilarating and inspirational yet grounded; a lack of irony can render it somber and sanctimonious. The real problem comes when irony degenerates into Seinfeldian cynicism, which lazily assumes everything George W. Bush (or any other politician) says is inauthentic. This more nuanced sense of irony is evident in parts of Purdy's book, but in the opening chapters, Purdy's sledgehammer approach obscures his essentially sound and important message.

A second criticism discounts Purdy's earnestness as a by-product of his privileged background. Raised by committed parents who moved to rural West Virginia to create a sane environment for their children, Purdy was home-schooled until age 13 before attending Exeter and Harvard. The charge is: With that background, I wouldn't be cynical either; maybe if he'd fought in a war or had a drunken father, he'd appreciate irony. But anyone who has sat around a Harvard dining room table, reeking of privilege, knows the cynic is highly revered, the idealist scorned. And it is to Purdy's credit that he has avoided this reflexive cynicism that comes with privilege.

The third thing that irks people about Purdy is his age. His elders are annoyed by all the attention—the lengthy profiles, his appearance as an NPR commentator—while Purdy's peers resent his anointment as generational spokesperson. A scathing review in *Harper's* brought up Purdy's age nine times in two pages. Of course jealousy does not constitute an argument against the substance of what Purdy says. His age (25) and his physical appearance (16) are unfortunate, instead, because they reinforce the debilitating stereotype that students and retired people are allowed and expected to be idealistic, while those of us slogging it out in the working world are hardened realists. A related criticism is that, as David Brooks has written, Purdy has "developed the ability to write like a university president at a very young age." But if his prose is sometimes heavy, it can at other times be eloquent and pithy. And, in any event, the focus on style elides the more important issue of substance.

Which leads us to a fourth criti-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cism, that Purdy's book is prudish and judgmental. This is a tricky criticism to evaluate; the line between upholding high standards and cloying self-righteousness is a thin one. Purdy might have walked this line better if he'd been more open about his own faults. But Purdy's large point is right: Cynicism is often less a sign of sophistication than of resignation, and irony can be useful to the ironist as a way of avoiding responsibility. While Purdy's earnestness is said to be brooding and unpleasant, cynicism is far more base and depressing.

Finally, the book is accused of being so wide-ranging that it lacks coherence. As *Harper's* justly observed, the author "seems to have included every single term paper he wrote at Harvard." But when Purdy turns his analysis to political life in the late 1990s, he is dead on. In the Clinton administration, Purdy sees an environmental president whose Interior Secretary rationalizes strip mining with demonstrably false claims about the power of reclamation. He sees a president who declares the need for a national conversation on race but emphasizes sentiment over concrete social change. Worst of all, he sees a president who came to office raising hopes and idealism and left us more cynical. Under this analysis, Clinton's crime is less that he can't keep his zipper shut and more that he can't keep his Bible to himself whenever people find out. The Clinton era helped close the gap between the cynical Ivy League and trusting West Virginia by encouraging us to believe that it's "all spin, all the way down."

Jedediah Purdy is right to object to these developments, and he should not be written off as a self-righteous child who doesn't know better. Idealism is too important to be left to the young and the old exclusively.

RICHARD D. KAHLENBERG, *a senior fellow at The Century Foundation, is author of* Broken Contract: A Memoir of Harvard Law School.

Uncoordinated

By Romesh Ratnesar

ON MARCH 24 OF THIS YEAR, one day into the NATO bombing campaign against Slobodan Milosevic, Bill Clinton announced to the nation that he had ruled out one possibility: "I do not intend to put our troops in Kosovo," he said.

That vow was at least in part the consequence of assurances from Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who believed Milosevic would cave in quickly once air strikes began. Pentagon officials, including Defense Secretary William Cohen and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also opposed an invasion. But as the campaign wore on with no end in sight, pressure began to build on the president to authorize the use of ground forces. Soon the consensus among the president's advisers broke down. Meanwhile, National Security Adviser Sandy Berger seized control of the inner war council from Albright, convening a meeting with foreign-policy experts critical of the administration, signaling to them that the President was prepared to shift his position. On June 2, Berger and members of the National Security Council met to discuss ground-invasion options. The next day, Clinton was to meet with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, presumably to exact their consent to send in troops, but by then Milosevic had signed an agreement to leave Kosovo. "The president... was prepared to send ground forces into Kosovo to assure a NATO victory," one former NSC official told *The New York Times*. "But why did he and his advisers arrive at this conclusion so late in the war?"

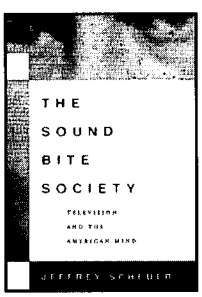
FLAWED BY DESIGN: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS and NSC
by Amy Zegart
Stanford University Press, $45.00

The answer can be found, in part, in Amy Zegart's incisive and revealing new book, *Flawed By Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS and NSC*. Though a case can be made that Clinton's vacillation on ground troops had a lot to do with his own uncertainty about how to execute a war, Clinton also had to contend with institutional defects which have frustrated every U.S. president since Harry Truman. Though most citizens (and theorists) assume that decisions of foreign policy are made with only the national interest in mind, Zegart argues that is often not the case: While the modern president is the supreme steward of foreign policy, he

"Breaks new intellectual ground" *

The Sound Bite Society

Television and the American Mind
by Jeffrey Scheuer



* "Lively and invigorating....delicious writing style" —*The Chicago Tribune*

"Stimulating and enjoyable....new insights ....may provoke [a] useful self-examination by liberals" —JAMES FALLOWS, *The Washington Monthly*

"Part polemic...part rainbow of dazzling insights" —VICTOR NAVASKY, publisher of *The Nation*

"Scheuer emerges as...a first-rank scholar [and] philosopher of the media." —DANIEL SCHORR, NPR news analyst

"Contends that television is inherently hospitable to right-leaning ideology" —*The New York Times Book Review*

order online at **www.thesoundbitesociety.com**
order by phone M-F, 9 to 5:30 Pacific Time: **1.800.788.3123, ext. 4**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

still receives advice from a multitude of bureaucracies, each behaving according to its self-interest. Indeed, such self-interest is woven into the very design of the NSC, JCS, and CIA. "In an absolute sense, American national security agencies are not created to serve American interests. They do not do their jobs as well as they should, or at least as well as they could."

Zegart, an assistant professor of public policy at UCLA who has worked on the NSC staff, is particularly thorough in describing the bureaucratic horse-trading that preceded the drafting of 1947's National Security Act, which created the NSC, JCS and CIA. Truman's primary priority was to unify the armed forces and create a new secretary of defense who could attend to the hard-business issues of military strategy, supply, and operations. The War Department drafted a proposal advocating a single, powerful military commander with jurisdiction over all armed forces and "decisive influence within the JCS," and a robust, centralized intelligence-gathering body. But the final products of the National Security Act included neither idea.

Zegart identifies the chief culprit as the United States Navy, which following World War II was the military's preeminent service and had "much to lose and little to gain by changing the existing... system." Vigorous lobbying by Navy Secretary James Forrestal resulted in the erection of a system that featured, at the time, a largely powerless Joint Chiefs of Staff and a similarly weak Central Intelligence Agency. To cement its power, the Navy also proposed the creation of a National Security Council that would bring together the country's highest-ranking national security officials, forming an independent foreign policy-making body through which the Navy could retain leverage upon presidential decisions.

But the NSC that emerged, after months of wrangling between the White House and the Navy, would serve different ends. The NSC, Zegart writes, was given no formal statutory control over foreign policy and its function was left vague enough that Truman quickly made sure everyone knew the NSC was his council, there to serve only his policy objectives. Future presidents followed the same line: Eisenhower elevated the influence of the NSC staff, whose loyalties were almost exclusively with the president, over that of the actual council. Kennedy, too, expanded the role of the national security adviser, appointed McGeorge Bundy to the position and turned the NSC staff into "a truly presidential foreign policy staff." Both Nixon and Carter followed Kennedy's lead, appointing esteemed foreign-policy intellectuals (Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski) as national security adviser.

The evolution of the modern NSC into the principal tool of presidential foreign policy-making has also attenuated of the clout of Cabinet departments. Reciting the list of largely enfeebled Secretaries of State since 1961—Dean Rusk, William Rogers, Warren Christopher—Zegart concludes, "It is the president and his national security advisor, not the secretary of state, who serve as the principal architects of U.S. foreign policy." To Zegart, that is a salutary development—the president is the only actor likely to pursue the national interest over his own. (Few members of Congress take much interest in foreign policy, knowing re-election rarely depends on the positions they strike on world affairs.)

All post-war presidents have invested considerable power in the NSC reflecting the fact that the other instruments of foreign policy-making are institutionally designed to work at cross-purposes to the national interest. Zegart reserves her harshest judgments for the design of the JCS and the CIA. The JCS that came out of the National Security Act was "incapable of offering a comprehensive military point of view" to the president; as a result, presidents often turned to civilian defense officials for basic battlefield advice. The CIA, meanwhile, was created without the authority to coordinate "intelligence from the rest of the community," which included the armed forces and the Justice Department.

The costs have been considerable. The JCS' lack of coordination and muddled chain of command, Zegart writes, was a direct cause of the disastrous effort to rescue American hostages in Iran and cost the lives of 241 Marines in Beirut in 1983. It was only after, as Zegart writes, "the political stars aligned," and the Goldwater-Nicholson Act of 1986 was passed that the JCS evolved into anything other than an ineffective and ultimately dangerous forum for interservice rivalry. Meanwhile, the CIA's the institutional weakness produced major intelligence lapses which contributed to the outbreak of the Korean War and the Bay of Pigs disaster. Even apparent successes, such as Reagan's invasion of Grenada in 1983, suffered from the lack of systematic coordination that was inherent in the design of national security agencies. "Ill-suited agencies may still end up producing positive outcomes," Zegart writes, "but they exact a high price in the process."

Zegart intends *Flawed by Design* to be an academic riposte to the prevailing realist theory of international relations, which assumes that in global politics, states act purely according to their interests; to the realist, the bureaucratic organization of a government has no discernable effect on the foreign policy it pursues. By convincingly arguing that U.S. interests have been compromised—at least in some instances—by the institutional design of national security agencies, Zegart's book, in my estimation, succeeds in puncturing some of realism's theoretical supremacy. But perhaps that judgment should be left for the theorists. What the casual reader takes away from Zegart's book is a deeper sense of appreciation—and even awe—for the enormous responsibilities placed on the presidency to shape the course of U.S. foreign policy.

Buffeted by advice and suggestions from all sides and hampered by the inefficiency and self-interest of bureaucracies, a president ultimately stands alone in making decisions of paramount importance. That the results have largely turned out so well should not be cause for complacency. As a new presidential campaign kicks off, the importance of presidential decision making should be a useful reminder of the gravity of the nation's highest office, and an argument against those candidates who might think that foreign policy is not worth serious attention, that the tough decisions can simply be left to well-informed advisers.

ROMESH RATNESAR *is a staff writer at* Time.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Capitol Repair Kit

While Washington burns with partisan rhetoric, we cool the air with clear-headed, innovative solutions to some of the nation's most unyielding problems. And we have fun doing it. **The Washington Monthly** explores the quirks, cons, and paralysis that too often underpin American politics—then we offer a sensible way out. *The New York Observer* says we are the magazine "to which anyone who gives a damn about this country must subscribe."

SUBSCRIBE NOW AND SAVE!

❑ YES! Enter my subscription for a full year (10 issues) to **The Washington Monthly** for only $29.95.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

❑ Payment enclosed ❑ Bill me later

Charge my ❑ VISA ❑ MasterCard

Credit Card # _____ Exp. _____

1611 Connecticut Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20009

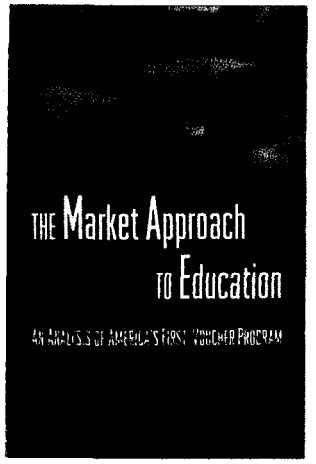
For Canadian and other foreign subscriptions add $7. Please remit U.S. funds.

A9901

"... holds up a deadly accurate mirror to the Washington political culture, exposing its hypocrisies, stupidities, and unexpected triumphs." — *Michael Beschloss*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW FROM PRINCETON



The Market Approach to Education

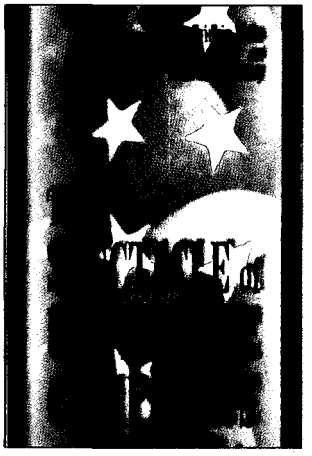
An Analysis of America's First Voucher Program

John F. Witte

In 1990, Milwaukee, one of the nation's most segregated metropolitan areas, implemented a school choice program aimed at improving the education of inner-city children by enabling them to attend private schools. The results of this experiment, however, have been overshadowed by the emotional debate it provoked nationwide.

In this book, John Witte provides a detailed framework for understanding the Milwaukee experiment and its implications for the market approach to American education.

Cloth $29.95 ISBN 0-691-00944-9



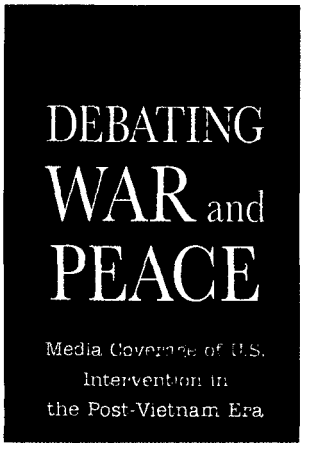
The Spectacle of U.S. Senate Campaigns

Kim Fridkin Kahn and Patrick J. Kenney

This book offers a bold, comprehensive look at how campaigns actually work, from the framing of issues to media coverage to voters' decisions. Kim Kahn and Patrick Kenney explore the details of candidates' strategies and messages, the content, tone, and bias of the media coverage, and the attitudes and behaviors of potential voters.

This book challenges the common wisdom that campaigns are a noisy, symbolic aspect of electoral politics. Campaigns, the authors argue, do matter in the political process.

Paper $18.95 ISBN 0-691-00505-2



Debating War and Peace

Media Coverage of U.S. Intervention in the Post-Vietnam Era

Jonathan Mermin

The First Amendment allows American journalists to present critical perspectives on government actions, but they rarely criticize U.S. military interventions. In fact, as Jonathan Mermin demonstrates, for the past two decades journalists have let the government set the terms of military policy debate in the news.

Mermin argues that a Washington consensus doesn't justify silencing criticism and he shows how the press can increase and exercise its independence.

Paper $14.95 ISBN 0-691-00534-6

Princeton University Press AT FINE BOOKSTORES • WWW.PUP.PRINCETON.EDU

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED